The Washington Monthly

AUGUST 1971/ONE DOLLAR

Why They Failed

The Senate's Lame Doves

Striking Out on Your Own: The Perils of Being Your Own Boss

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Letters

Monopoly

Charles Mueller's well-founded iteration of monopolistic excesses ["Monopoly with Real Money," April] will meet with little criticism from followers of the dismal science, certainly not from this writer. Although I would disagree with his inference that most economists fail to identify monopoly as a major source of both unemployment and inflation, small exception can be taken with his argument. However, the positive results which are Mr. Mueller's explicit intent in his expose, simultaneous increase in employment levels and real disposable income, cannot be achieved if reform is limited only to fragmentation of market power in the product market.

Equally important is concentration in factor markets; specifically, monopolistic labor unions. All of the economic abuses, social injustices, and political kickbacks legitimately ascribed to GM, IBM, and other oligopolistic producers may be just as validly applied to the UAW, Teamsters, and other international labor unions. Questions of countervailing power and the rise of the American labor movement aside, let it at least be recognized that, if we are to redirect the powers of bureaucracy toward the restoration of free enterprise, the attack must be made on a general front.

FREDERICK W. OBERMILLER
Seabrook, Md.

Lt. Obermiller, a Ph.D. in economics, is with the U. S. Army Medical Department.

The author, Charles Mueller, replies:

The power of labor unions to bring about higher-than-competitive prices is itself largely dependent on the existence of oligopoly in their industries. Textile workers, for example, do not get inflationary wage settlements; the industry is competitive in structure and thus lacks the power to "pass on" such wage costs to the ultimate consumer. The union, knowing it "can't get blood out of a turnip," moderates its demands accordingly. In autos, steel, petroleum, aluminum, copper and a long list of other such oligopoly industries, on the other hand, the unions observe the monopoly profits of their industries and demand, as one might expect, a share of the booty. The industries, knowing they have the industry structure (oligopoly) to collusively get it all back from consumers (who are of course primarily workers in other industries), "cooperate" with their unions in granting wage increases in excess of their productivity gains. In other words, these oligopoly industries "buy" industrial peace, and preserve their own continuing monopoly profits, with the consumer's money.

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City

What Is a City?

In the U.S., it's a crisis. It's also the name of a magazine that helps you to understand the complexity of the crisis and what can be done about it.

CITY was launched by Urban America Inc. in spring, 1967, at a time when the phrase "urban crisis," far from being a cliché, represented a fresh and frightening concept for many Americans. CITY's chosen role was to explore and define the nature of the crisis and to report and analyze the nation's response.

One of the most positive aspects of this response reported in CITY's early issues was formation of the Urban Coalition of national leaders. Now Urban America and the Urban Coalition have merged to form the National Urban Coalition which has assumed publication of CITY.

In many respects CITY's mission remains the same, but it has been given a new format and a broader scope. The latter is expressed in the subtitle "magazine of urban life and environment."

Thus, the term "urban" in the subtitle refers to urban, or urbanized, or metropolitan areas, rather than to central cities only.

Metropolitan areas have become the basic units of American life. The ways they have developed (and are developing), the ways they are governed, the resources and problem-solving capacities they command, importantly determine the quality of American life for nearly three-fourths of the nation's population.

CITY's concerns extend to national problems and phenomena that are also significant determinants of the quality of life for residents of urban areas: poverty, racial discrimination, the workings of the federal and state governments, population growth and movement.

Similarly, CITY's concerns extend beyond the present to the nation's increasingly urbanized future. One of its major concerns, in fact, is the process of urbanization itself: the ways, planned or unplanned, conserving or wasteful, healing or divisive, in which urban growth and development occur.

The term "environment" in the subtitle also is used broadly. It encompasses man's use (and abuse) of nature's resources, and the quality of what man builds, both of which will be given significant coverage in CITY; but it also encompasses many less tangible, less visible, but no less real influences on urban life. CITY will continue to point out that the nation's most pressing environmental crisis is in the urban slums and ghettos, and that it is compounded of such things as fear and social disorganization as well as littered streets, fetid air, and decayed housing.

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Again, if there were no oligopoly industries in the country, there would be few if any inflationary wage settlements.

Helicopter Gunships

I read with interest—and chagrin—the article by my good friend Jeffrey Record, "Maximizing COBRA Utilization," in your April issue. As the Open Arms Program advisor in Bac Lieu Province during late 1968 and 1969, I worked closely with Mr. Record on many projects and was familiar with many of the issues which he raises.

His account of the civilian officers' protest concerning the use of helicopter gunships is misleading. I was one of the "group of younger civilians" to which Mr. Record refers, and provided him with most of the evidence derived from defectors about the effects of gunship strikes. His other principle source was the provincial hospital.

The evidence from both sources was mixed. There were indeed terrible numbers of civilians killed and wounded in these attacks. This is also true of other weapons used in Vietnam, including the often wildly inaccurate artillery fire and plain old infantry rifles and machine guns—which are quite "indiscriminate" in the hands of an average Vietnamese soldier. The difference is essentially one of degree.

Mr. Record writes, "*Any* use of Cobras in a densely populated province having only a small enemy presence would be indiscriminate" (page 10). He offers no elaboration or refinement of this blanket premise. This is not only unfortunate, but misleading and unfair to the Province Senior Advisor and other responsible Americans in the province at the time:

—*unfortunate*, because perhaps Mr. Record could have made an ethical case against the use of *any* lethal weapons in populated areas.

—*misleading*, because, as "densely" populated as Bac Lieu Province is, there are substantial areas, particularly in the mangrove swamps, which were virtually uninhabited except for the Viet Cong, and there are huge tracts of rice paddies between villages (which tend to be strung out along canals and roads) which are only very lightly populated.

—*unfair*, because, having raised his position to that of a moral tautology, Mr. Record then fails to report correctly the Province Senior Advisor's response to the issue. Mr. Record writes (page 12), "The memorandum came too late. By April, the PSA and most of the officers on the team had become convinced that the Phantom program was indispensable to the defeat of the Viet Cong in Bac Lieu. They had become mesmerized by the familiar litany of aerial warfare in Vietnam: 'Kills by air, sampans sunk, enemy structures destroyed.' "

My recollection of the facts on the gunship controversy in Bac Lieu is quite different:

—After the memorandum—which was drafted by Mr. Record, and jointly signed by him, myself, and a third American officer, the Province Senior Advisor requested the military operations advisor to write something explaining *his* (opposing) position on the use of the Cobras. Faced with a division of opinion among his own staff, the Province Senior Advisor first sought to inform himself on the opinion of both sides—a management approach with which no reasonable man could disagree. The military operations advisor's response was a pitiful mishmash of jargon and prejudice, utterly lacking in factual grounding, and so poorly written that it was a great source of mirth to the rest of us.

—The PSA thereupon issued his own directive on the use of Cobra gunships in the province. As I recall it, the memorandum had two essential points: 1) Gunships were to be used routinely against enemy troops *only* when such troops were in direct contact with friendly troops on the ground; and 2) other uses of the gunships outside the free-fire zones were to be first personally approved by the PSA, and only in extraordinary circumstances.

As one of the dissenters, I was personally quite satisfied with this restrictive directive.

Answers to July Political Puzzle:

1 W	E	2 S	H	3 A	L	4 L	O	5 V	E	6 R	C	7 O	M	8 E
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9 S	T	A	K	E	S	O	U	T		10 F	R	E	S	H
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11 A	D	L	I	B		13 S	P	H	E	R	I	C	A	L
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14 D	U	15 C	A	T		16 L	O	17 T		18 E	L	A	N	D
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30 S	U	S	A	N		31 E	Q	U	I	N	O	X	E	S
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32 L	O	V	E	I	T	O	R	L	E	A	V	E	I	T

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Mr. Record is entitled to feel as he wishes about the PSA's response to the issue, but it is astounding that he forgot to mention in his article that the PSA *did* respond to the issue.

Mr. Record's article is misleading in other, more generalized, ways. It is now common "educated" American opinion that the American military in Vietnam are primarily interested in a high "body count," to satisfy the "insatiable computers in Saigon," as Mr. Record puts it. The most "insatiable" demand of the computer in Saigon is the "Hamlet Evaluation System," based on monthly reports by District Chiefs and their American advisors (many of whom are civilians), which cover a whole complex of questions, few of which have anything at all to do with "body count."

Mr. Record never comes to grips with the central problem: how to fight a war of counter-insurgency effectively, and justly. He is hardly the first to fail to do this. And, like others, it is precisely his polemic moralistic approach which renders him incapable of defining the problem precisely in operational terms. Perhaps, had he been faced with operational military responsibility in his job in Vietnam, he would have come to view the Cobra gunship in a different light.

PAUL D. MOLINEAUX
Frankfurt, Germany

Mr. Molineaux is a Foreign Service Officer, currently assigned to the U. S. Consulate in Frankfurt.

The author replies:

Mr. Molineaux has apparently forgotten the contents of the memorandum on the Phantom program which he himself signed. That memorandum—dated April 7, 1969, and sent directly to the Province Senior Advisor—stated "the Phantom program in Bac Lieu is, by its very nature, too destructive and indiscriminate" and concluded flatly that "the program should be discontinued."

Although (to my knowledge) Mr. Molineaux never had any first-hand experience with Cobra gunship strikes in Bac Lieu and had in fact played little if any role in exposing the program's stupidity, he nevertheless was so convinced of its "negative impact. . . upon the uncommitted and friendly civilian population" (again I quote the memorandum he signed), that he joined the chorus of those who were demanding the program's cancellation. Indeed, in his letter above, he still admits that "terrible numbers of civilians" were killed and wounded by the strikes. However, this unjustified slaughter of defenseless noncombatants appears to Mr. Molineaux in retrospect somehow less disturbing than it was at the time. He seems to have fortified himself with a menagerie of *post facto* rationalizations. Consider, for example, his suggestion that, so far as the capacity to inflict indiscriminate destruction is concerned, there is little difference between high-speed, heavily-armed assault helicopters and "plain old infantry rifles." This parallels his assertion that MACV's obsession with body counting is a myth.

Mr. Molineaux is correct on one point, however. I did not include in my article the Province Senior Advisor's response to the Phantom memorandum. The response was meaningless. It was simply a written statement "assuring" the opponents of the program that in the future greater care would be taken in targeting Phantom strikes. That piece of paper had little appreciable impact on the actual conduct of the air war in Bac Lieu. As far as I know, no Cobra gunship pilot ever received a copy of the "directive," and while it was duly filed at Bac Lieu's own Tactical Operations Center (which was responsible for coordinating and targeting the strikes) there was never an indication that its substance received anything more than perfunctory obedience.

I have recently had several conversations with a young American officer who continued to organize and direct the Phantom program in Bac Lieu long after my departure from Vietnam in August, 1969. Although an avid supporter of the program, he candidly admitted that numerous "unfortunate incidents" (in one case a deliberate attack on a South Vietnamese outpost) continued in the wake of the seemingly unmanageable employment of Cobra gunships.

In my opinion the PSA's response was designed solely to mollify the opponents of the program (military men as well as civilians) while at the same time leaving the "hardliners" a free hand. The refusal of the PSA to terminate the program (as requested by Mr. Molineaux, myself, and others) and the fact that it took the PSA, whose office was next to mine, over six weeks before he even formally replied to the original memorandum leads me to the conclusion that the senior advisors who had the power never entertained any serious intentions of curtailing the program, much less ending it. They viewed opposition to unrestrained air strikes primarily as a nuisance which could be erased by a written statement full of sweet assurances.

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Cooing Down the War: The Senate's Lame Doves

by John Rothchild

It is still difficult, in this tenth year of Vietnam, to find the war in the halls and offices of the United States Senate. Even the chambers of the doves share in the schizophrenia of the nation—the war is repressed to back rooms where legislative aides struggle to stamp the horrors of refugees and bombings in the consciousness of the general public, but the public that visits the outer offices is reminded only of the beauty of Kentucky or the Big Sky Country or of the fecundity of the Idaho potato.

It is as hard to reconcile the front and back rooms as it is to reconcile the dove senators with their actions on the war. Life goes on here, like everywhere, not as usual but as if it were as usual, and the person who stops in these offices is smothered in reasonableness. Surrounded by the scenic posters and soft clickings of typewriters and the drone of aides who recount the antiwar victories to date—the Mansfield amendment, Cooper-Church, the repeal of the Gulf of Tonkin Resolution—the urgency is padded by politics and time. The Senate always takes time, they say. It probably never could have started this war. Now, ironically, it seems equally unsuited to end it for the same reasons. The limits of Senate doveism go largely unperceived by the peace forces that still base their actions on writing letters and appealing to senators. Many who have lost hope in the Executive and the House of Representatives continue in the unexamined belief that Senate doves have done everything they could in the past, and therefore will do so in the future.

In the offices, the assistants seem, without prompting, to play an early

John Rothchild is a managing editor of The Washington Monthly. *Some of the material on filibustering is taken from a paper by Lester Jackson, an instructor at CCNY.*

The senators in the drawings are, left to right: Percy, Kennedy, Church, Cooper, McCarthy, Fulbright, Hatfield, Goodell, Gravel, Nelson, and McGovern.

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convert game. Nobody is ready to declare that his man is the earliest dove on record, but the competition persists. In Frank Church's office, one gets a brochure entitled "The Day Frank Church Became a Dove," which goes on to say that "while Fulbright plugged for support of Saigon, the Idahoan pointed to perils of an Asian war" in a Senate speech of June 23, 1964. It was a meek speech—"I am for [our] policy. I will vote for the added money that may be needed. But I am just setting up some warning posts that had better be pondered if we are to avoid a tragic trail of casualties in Asia." Over at Mark Hatfield's you are told that he was the only governor to vote against the resolution supporting the war at the 1965 and 1966 National Governors' Conferences. George McGovern claims a speech as early as Church's, and early doveism moves Fulbright to lament the fact that he was floor manager for the Gulf of Tonkin Resolution.

The attractiveness of early conversion to peace, however, also carries certain disadvantages. More recent converts, like Milton Young of North Dakota, might be automatically granted the immunity of innocents, the judgment that his prior heresy was all right because it was sincerely held, the absolution that makes one equal in the faith even at extreme unction. His thoughts are now purified and his previous record was honestly consistent with his views. The doves who decided that the war was wrong or immoral around 1965, however, have a hard time explaining their voting records and their inaction since then, the five-year lag between their conclusions about the nature of the war and any significant opposition to it, the drag between the ends and the means.

By 1966, senators like Fulbright were already active in seeking to change the public's mind on the war, and yet only two senators, Morse and Gruening, voted against the $13.1-billion supplemental for Vietnam that year. According to the Friend's Committee on National Legislation, "Although many Congressmen, largely from the President's own party, have continued to express alarm over the Vietnamese conflict, they have also continued to vote funds to expand the war."

By 1967, according to the Associated Press canvass, 40 out of 84 responding senators said they disapproved of the President's war policy

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for one reason or another. But in that year, only three senators, the usual two plus Gaylord Nelson, voted against the $12-billion supplemental to carry on the war. The Senate also approved a four-year extension of the draft, 70 to 2, with Morse and Gruening in opposition. And a Gruening amendment to prohibit sending draftees to Southeast Asia without their consent, remarkably similar to a bill introduced in the House this year, likewise garnered only two supporting votes—Gruening and Morse. During this time, McGovern, Hatfield, Proxmire, Bayh, Muskie, Kennedy, McCarthy, Church, and Fulbright were all in the Senate.

In 1967, Mike Mansfield began his role as mild peace mediator by introducing an amendment to substitute for, and thereby kill, one offered by Morse and Joseph Clark that would have blocked further bombing of North Vietnam and prohibited an increase of personnel in Vietnam to over 500,000 men. Instead, the Mansfield statement expressed the intentions of Congress to support our boys in South Vietnam, offered support for the peace efforts of "men of good will," and called for an international conference.

The climate of opinion that could seriously accept such nonsense in the middle of an undeclared war still existed in 1968, when again only Morse and Nelson voted against the supplemental, this time for $6 billion. William Proxmire did introduce an amendment to delete $268 million for increased B-52 raids, which he called "a moral equivalent to nuclear war," but it was defeated, 10 to 79, on the grounds that expanded bombing was a defensive response to Viet Cong attacks. This amendment got some dove support—Morse, Hatfield, McGovern, Young, Nelson, Pell, Clark, Hart, and Javits all voted for it. But Fulbright and Kennedy were absent from the vote, and Church, Percy, Bayh Hartke, Cooper, Case, Muskie, and Symington all voted for the bombs.

While the antiwar senators were convinced that Vietnam was at best a tragic mistake, none refrained from voting the same kind of military assistance to other Indochina countries that began the Vietnam involvement in the first place. By this time, plenty of doves were against the war per se, but they were not opposed to the context from which it emerged. Thus, as late as 1968, a bill that made Defense money usable in Laos and Thailand for support of local forces was passed with the customary three dissenters—Gruening, Morse, Nelson. Among those voting for the bill were Fulbright, Hart, McGovern, Proxmire, Case, Cooper, Hatfield, and Javits.

Hawk Stennis and Hawk McGovern

Before 1969, the great rhetorical gulf that split the legislative body into hawks and doves could not be detected in the voting records. Except for Morse, Gruening, and sometimes Nelson, they were all equal hawks on the tally sheets—Stennis and McGovern, Bellmon and Church, Byrd and Hatfield. Some were, in theory, against the war, some believed by this time that Vietnam was a disaster and that the government had lied about it, but voting against it was a different matter.

Not only did doves find nothing inconsistent in sanctifying the munitions, commitments, and money that would later fuel the war in places like Laos while at the same time decrying what these commodities had caused in Vietnam, but even in Vietnam itself the belief persisted that the bullets still had to be provided. Some doves started voting against the defense budgets around 1969 and 1970, but in 1970 a Goodell-Nelson amendment to prohibit the use of defoliant chemicals in Vietnam was rejected by a vote of 22 to 62. While many doves voted for it, a substantial number, including Church, Percy, Cooper, Kennedy, Symington, and Javits, opted for the defoliants.

The distinctions that divide doves are not any greater than those that

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separate doves and hawks. The press has magnified the pro- and antiwar opposites in its trick mirrors, but it is almost impossible to differentiate a Ted Stevens, long a supporter of Nixon policy who recently co-sponsored an amendment to set a fixed date to end the war, from a Charles Percy, who voted for the Cooper-Church amendment but against the first Hatfield-McGovern; or an Edward Kennedy, who supported the Gravel filibuster but voted for defoliants in 1970, from a Hubert Humphrey, with an equally mixed record; or a John Stennis, who votes against all antiwar amendments, from a John Sherman Cooper, who votes against all except his own. The difference between a Javits or Bayh and a Milton Young or Henry Jackson is a matter of a few votes, and in many specific instances, they vote together on the war issue.

There have always been confusing degrees of doveism, but it is especially troublesome now that the blurring of peace reflects the blurring of war. If troops don't know who the enemy is or why we are fighting, it is equally hard for peace forces to sort out motives and commitments, and true pacifist ornithology among the putty doves like Packwood, Percy, and Brooke, whose commitment seems to hang in the balance of phone calls; the political doves like Muskie, Bayh, Kennedy, Mansfield, and Javits; the decoy doves like Cooper, who seems more concerned with the Constitution than with the war. Even among the small group of consistent and devoted doves, there are marked differences in instinct and manner—Mike Gravel, the first to be willing to embarrass the club; McGovern, Alan Cranston, and Harold Hughes, who likewise do not temper their fervor too much and seem ready to try anything; Fulbright, somewhat tired after years of opposition, who does not organize and push but is unequalled in hearings and lends his vote to every action; Church the committed constitutionalist; Gaylord Nelson, who is not publicly recog-

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nized as a dove leader, but who has the longest and best voting record on the war of any active senator; Hart and Proxmire, who are almost always right on the votes.

The records of the dove senators, still curiously obscured, seemingly have more to do with folkways of the Senate than with their opinions on the war. Before the Goodell bill of 1969, which would have set a date for withdrawal and cut off funds afterwards, nobody had thought of a way to legislate an end to the war—nobody, in fact, had considered it within the context of the Senate. "That was my frustration," Goodell now says. "When I went around in 1968, everybody was wringing his hands and saying the President should get us out, but nobody had found a vehicle to do anything within the Senate." And when he introduced his bill in 1969, after years of war and dovish speeches, he couldn't get any co-sponsors. "Not Hatfield or McGovern or anybody. Gene McCarthy said it was too risky." In explaining why it wasn't until 1969 that someone tried to legislate an end to the war, or until 1971 that any senator devised a filibuster to starve it, the institution of the Senate itself is always the first answer.

Shouting up the Line

The glue of the Senate has, to date, been stronger than the most divisive issue of our time. It has not been undone by a higher version of the confrontations that have taken place at the universities or on the streets, and, while tact may be an important political tool, something of the desperation of the war could not coexist with it. The perimeters that hold in the tempers also hold the outrage within the proper rituals, which provide time for waiting, cooling, and avoiding ultimate conclusions. As former Senator Charles Goodell says, "From 1964 to 1968 you had senators who took strong views against the war but still in terms of Senate structure, its establishment. I would put Fulbright in that category—he saw the frontiers and wouldn't go beyond them. He used his committee but would never make a specific, direct, attack."

Kenneth Clark wonders if great thoughts can come from large rooms. It is also worth wondering what extreme measures can ever emerge from the Senate, where the war has reached the last rhetorical straw, but, according to an aide of Senator Fulbright, "I don't think it's reached the point yet where he'd stop the whole congressional machinery to cut off funds for the war"; where, according to John Holum of Senator McGovern's staff, "It still hasn't gotten to the point where the peace issue crosses party lines so you get a Democratic peace candidate supporting a Republican one, and so on"; or where the Pentagon papers given months ago to Fulbright and McGovern were filed away and forgotten because both senators were afraid to use classified materials. Doug Ross, former assistant to Senator Joseph Tydings, worked closely with the antiwar senators during last year's Hatfield-McGovern efforts. He says, "They were willing to fight the war within conventional political boundaries, but they feared that Nixon would spring a trap on them. George McGovern seemed most interested in doing something, but even he wasn't ready for a Profiles in Courage. And this war was simply not something that kept them up nights."

Until recently, the dove senators have been committed only to a war of rhetoric, which they won long ago. There was a time when even words were courageous, but the war has won a victory over the words by seducing them, so that now it is not distinctive to talk against the war, even while you are escalating it. The incursions into Laos and Cambodia were supported in the Senate by professed doves like Dole and Stennis—their disagreement with men like McGovern, they all say, was just a tactical dispute over the best way of getting out. Even Hatfield pays some homage to this thinking, in referring to the first Hatfield-

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McGovern Amendment: "We were told that those who supported the amendment were not the only ones who were for peace. That all senators were for peace, but disagreed over the means to achieve it. Of course we agreed."

Perhaps Vietnam could not fail to be lost in the rites of forebearance and compromise fashioned during the last century to insure the survival of the Senate. Many issues, from tariffs to civil rights, might have brought down the government if the senators had expressed the depths of their antipathy for what the other side stood for. The traditions have held through Vietnam, as eulogies of friendship between doves and hawks are common. Mark Hatfield, speaking for his amendment to end the war, bubbles with these words for one of its arch opponents, John Stennis:

Mr. President, I have listened carefully to the comments and the presentation made by the Senator from Mississippi, the chairman of our Armed Services Committee.

I am grateful for the relationship that we have here as colleagues on this floor, but more than that, as close personal friends. Often, people from outside the Senate organization cannot understand how men can deeply, vociferously, and intensely differ on issues and still maintain mutual respect and personal friendship. I think of all the men and one lady with whom I have served in this body, this is always one of my most reiterated thoughts as it relates to my personal relationship with the senator from Mississippi.

One can understand civility as a necessary part of politics, but it is hard to reconcile the anguished views on the war with the friendly embrace between the senators. If the sedative of decorum is the price of survival, it also puts the outrage to sleep. And this fondness for congressional decorum explains in part why doves have never attempted to end the war by disrupting Senate business.

This inaction was not due to any lack of suggestion. Daniel Ellsberg, who visited Senator Goodell after his defeat made him a lame duck in late 1970, tried to get the senator to filibuster against defense appropriations or some other war measure. But since

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Goodell had not been reelected, he decided his efforts would be futile. Lester Jackson, a political science instructor at the City College of New York, suggested to some senators in 1969 that they work to enlist the support of 34 committed colleagues (the number necessary to stop cloture and continue a stall), rather than pursue the futile task of passing resolutions or bills that either had no impact or could be easily defeated in the House or vetoed by the President. Finding people against the war was easy. But finding anybody who would do everything in their power to stop it was a different matter. Many of the doves are liberals who have long been against Rule 22, which provided the conservatives so much leverage on civil rights, and the vision of segregated motels apparently overrode that of the burning hamlets, and the rule became more important than the issue of the war itself.

The men who call this a desperate war have not acted desperately. Many of them were surprised by the filibuster, surprised by Gravel's all-night reading of the Pentagon papers, surprised, as Vance Hartke was, when a veteran approached him at a recent party and inquired, after hearing about all the dove frustrations, why they hadn't tried a hunger strike on the floor of the Senate.

The peace constituencies have never pressured the doves to filibuster, play rough, or take any other drastic actions to stop the war. Instead, they have been satisfied with the speeches and the gestures—which Standard Oil or the AMA would find a totally unacceptable performance from the senators they support. "Anything done by congressional peace advocates has been gratefully accepted and applauded," writes Lester Jackson. "Dove constituents have been impressed with debates and hearings, with resolutions and with resolutions repealing resolutions, with moral victories and symbolic events."

While outside groups appeal to doves to understand the nature of the war, the Senate's perception of its own nature is what has kept actions so far behind words. Perhaps senators are no different from the rest of us, who can call the war immoral but still pay taxes to support it, or who can wear peace buttons to work in a company that makes war materiel or in a university that survives from its investments in the defense industry. The institutions of America have made individual views often irrelevant—just as company can have racist hiring practices while all of its officers believe in equal rights, the national war assembly line can be comprised of people who oppose the war, all shouting up the line as they manufacture their respective parts, taxpayers shouting to the senators, senators shouting to the big man at the end of the line. The Senate is a carrier of the war, no different from many other institutions that find it easier to go outside of themselves and appeal for a cure than to stop the flow of the disease through their own bodies.

"Senator X Wouldn't Pay For These"

When Senate doves appeal for a war cure, they usually address themselves to the President, for the White House is the center of antiwar efforts, a gravity that drags every dove into its orbit. The war itself would not have happened, the Senators say, without a bully Executive that disdained the Congress, and yet the current fight against that Executive seeks his approval, seeks to persuade him as if he were Commander-in-Chief of the peace forces, too. Jerry Tinker, of Senator Kennedy's staff, says, "The best way is to *persuade* the President. We don't make executive decisions, it is not the nature of the legislative branch. The Senate never does anything clear-cut or definitive. I think Kennedy believes these bills to be a bad thing because if you had a good President, you wouldn't need them."

From the earliest days, dove efforts have been limited to what the President would accept. Congress has

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never passed antiwar legislation that was opposed by the Administration. Ernest Gruening recalls a meeting with Lyndon Johnson at which he "actually twitted us on this—he said, 'I don't care what kind of speeches you make as long as you don't vote against the appropriations.' " George Reedy, who was LBJ's press secretary at the time, says, "They must cast about for a means of action that will push the President into getting out without getting his back up. You don't want to alienate him, you've got to convince him." Reedy also agrees that "Johnson never put the real heat on them—but he might have if he'd had to."

The doves have opposed policy, but to stop the war would be to make policy, a burden that only a handful of them would be willing to carry. Most wouldn't be willing because the average Senator has no more idea what is going on in foreign affairs than the average reader of *The New York Times*. They can test the edges of policy, and demand a voice in its making, but few would make Congress responsible for policy—few relish the vision of the President on television telling the nation that communism has taken over in Indochina because the Congress forced him to withdraw too fast. "The senators got very frightened," says Doug Ross, former Tydings staff man. "It's a very dangerous game." Tom Dine, assistant to Frank Church, says that "senators are still used to being treated like children."

Part of this timidity about facing down the President on the war arises because voting for defense automatically is essential within the context of the Senate—and the senators therefore have no credible threat against the President. While opposition to any other legislation is within the rights of a senator, voting against any defense bills is like civil disobedience, a congressional version of not paying taxes. Voting against defense is worse, in some ways than lying in front of troop trains, because, it is thought, such a move involves taking the guns out of our boys' hands. There is that vision of a battlefield with a few brave young Americans surrounded by a closing knot of North Vietnamese, while a credit adjustor slips through the enemy lines to repossess our guns, and declare, "Senator X wouldn't pay for these."

This image has had much more power than even the communist hordes or the domino theory in deterring antiwar senators from actually doing anything other than asking the President to end the war. It is part of the whole confusion between President as Executive and as Commander-in-Chief that has resulted in the logic that even if a war was started wrongly, it is unpatriotic to force a President to stop it before he is ready. The fear of repossessed ammunition has no basis in fact; there are enough stockpiles and materials in the pipeline so that the President could wage the war long after Congress cut off the funds, if he wanted. But it is a fear that combines neatly with the new rationale for Vietnam—that we are there to protect the men who are there—and has tied up the logic of the Senate, waterlogged the antiwar bills and amendments, and made even doves sound like reluctant versions of Senator Robert Dole, who always supports the President because he is the President.

Much Ado About Nothing

The meanderings of one such water-logged bill—the Cooper-Church amendment to prohibit the introduction of U. S. ground troops into Cambodia—illustrates better than anything else the ironies of the dove efforts to end the war. When he wanted to arouse Congress' fervor by proclaiming its own responsibility and bemoaning its lost glories and its power to declare war, Church would speak of the unaccountable Executive and of the decline of Rome: "The Roman Caesars did not spring full blown from the brow of Zeus. Subtly and insidiously, they stole their powers away from an unsuspecting Senate. They

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strangled the Republic with skillful hands." When, however, he sought wide support for the Cooper-Church ban, he soothed those who were against tying the President's hands by telling them that the amendment would not hamstring or limit the President, who already agreed with it anyway: "From a conversation I had with the President last evening, it is my understanding now that he no longer takes exception to the limiting language. He feels it conforms with his own policy in Cambodia."

The first Cooper-Church amendment, which prohibited American ground combat troops into either Laos or Thailand, became law in December, 1969, with little opposition. The sponsors had, however, forgotten Cambodia, a little loophole through which plunged thousands of troops in April, 1970, at the very time Cooper and Church were considering a second amendment to close the loop. The second Cooper-Church, an amendment to the Foreign Military Sales Bill, was debated for seven weeks during May and June, 1970, while the American soldiers were mopping up the Cambodia countryside. The amendment was riddled with further amendments by an Administration that wanted to stall its passage long enough to make certain that it appeared after the President had withdrawn from Cambodia through his own will, and not through congressional persuasion. It passed the Senate 58 to 37 on June 30, precisely at the time we were getting out, anyway. The House did not pass the bill, and it was blocked in the Senate-House conference for six months. Finally, on December 31, the conferees agreed to drop it.

Church participated with the rather strange coalition of Gordon Allott, Jacob Javits, and Robert Griffin, to work out compromises on his bill that had the effect of gutting any meaningful ban on the air war or on the hiring of Asian mercenaries to fill in for GIs, so that the symbolic ban on U. S. ground troops could be put through. According to Cooper assistant Bill Miller, "the compromise was worked out by the Senate group with White House and State Department help."

The amendment came up again with the Foreign Assistance Act of 1971, which was debated on the floor of the Senate during December, 1970. The bill was important because President Nixon had stolen away about $100 million in foreign assistance money for use in Cambodia during 1970—money that Congress, in its relative wisdom, had specifically given to Taiwan, Greece, and Turkey. This was done without the consent, or even the knowledge of Congress, and now Nixon was returning to ask them to approve his move by replacing the transferred funds and also to appropriate money for Cambodian military and economic assistance.

The whole future of the war seemed to be contained in this bill. Here the elements of unlimited presidential power and disdain of Congress came to rub against his need to seek legislative blessing for the new war policy, Vietnamized, based precisely on this kind of money assistance to Indochinese soldiers. Here was the Cooper-Church amendment to prohibit U. S. ground troops in Cambodia, which sought to reform the past, the already irrelevant war, and separate amendment by Mike Gravel to cut off the foreign aid to Cambodia, which struck at the heart of the new policy.

And the debate also had something of the feel of an American Legion teenage legislature, because it was admitted throughout that probably nothing the Senators did would make any difference. The acquiescence in the President's policy would have political value, like a Gulf of Tonkin Resolution, but if the President wanted money for Cambodia, he would still find it in other places. Senator Fulbright said: "I support the motion of the Senator from Alaska on the, in a sense, very narrow ground that authorizing new money will be interpreted as an endorsement of a policy.

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The Senate's amendment will not have any serious effect on the availability of dollars for the President's use."

The war has always seeped through the pores of the Senate, around loopholes in the law and into the Executive. As an example, Fulbright cited Section 614 of the Foreign Assistance Act, which permits the President to give up to $250 million a year to any country that is a victim of "active communist or communist-supported aggression" without regard to the requirements of the act. Although highly relevant to the Gravel amendment, this prerogative is only a small nodule on the mound of transfer powers, stockpiles, and special powers that makes Congress the President's credit card. "I reiterate," said Fulbright, "that there is no way to prevent this." "We are," he continued, "placing hundreds of millions of dollars, if not billions of dollars, of military equipment, all over the world in countries with which we do not even have treaties."

Senator Church opposed the Gravel amendment, perhaps to protect his own. His arguments surprisingly paralleled the Administration rationale for the whole war. We shouldn't be in Cambodia, he said, it was a mistake. But now that we are there, we must accept our responsibilities and fund the military. He waned into early doveism by proclaiming, "I know of no member of this body whose opposition to the war goes back any farther than my own," but then talked of a fear that Cambodia might fall into the hands of the enemy, the same fear that led Nixon to keep troops in Vietnam:

> Mr. Church: If nothing is done, no financial assistance extended, no weapons or equipment furnished—it is quite likely that all of Cambodia could quickly fall into enemy hands.
>
> Mr. Gravel: What effect will that have?
>
> Mr. Church: That would have a direct bearing on our position in South Vietnam. It would have a bearing upon the continued withdrawal of American troops and the rate of their withdrawal. It could profoundly affect such prospects as there are today for a

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successful completion of the President's withdrawal program."

The Church forces were willing to support the new war in order to help President Nixon stop the old one, to give guns to Cambodia for a meek, retrospective echo in the foreign policy debate. As Gravel put it:

> If the victory of the Cooper-Church amendment—and that victory, let me say, is the interpretation of a remark by the President at a Christmas party—if the price for that victory is the legalization and the undertaking of the Cambodian affair, the expansion of the war in Southeast Asia, and our agreeing to that as a part of national policy . . . that price, to my mind, is too much to pay.

To further complicate the problem of separating the doves from the doves, the Gravel amendment got 33 votes, including those of Fulbright, Goodell, Hart, Hartke, Hughes, Kennedy, Mansfield, McCarthy, McGovern, Nelson, Muskie, Proxmire, and Symington. Its victorious opponents included Church, Bayh, Case, Cooper, Cranston, Javits, Metcalf, Percy, and Packwood. Cooper-Church, of course, was finally passed. Church called the passage "a historic moment."

Frank Church is one of the best and most committed doves, supporting the recent Gravel filibuster against the draft and the Hatfield-McGovern amendments. His record makes the more nimble-footed and confused doves like Bayh, Cooper, and Muskie look mushy indeed. His performance on the Cooper-Church amendment is not, therefore, evidence that he is less sincere than the others—but that the legislative process molds them all.

Part of the price of the Cooper-Church effort is the energy that Church poured into it. While there is much reason against the war, there is so little passion that it is tragic to observe Church expending his on a seven-week debate, and what is thought to be the most extensive lobbying campaign ever undertaken for an antiwar measure, regarding a milky bill that amounted to another request for the President.

Peace by the Nose

Doves talk of appealing to the people to persuade the President, and yet they have never synchronized the legislative machinery and the protest machinery. The combination of public fervor and antiwar bills arises only rarely, usually after an unpopular executive action like Cambodia. Doves have waited for the people to come to them. David Mixner, one of the leaders of the October, 1969, Moratorium, says, "The senators could have ended the war long ago, but they lacked the courage. They let the people lead them rather than vice versa. They surrendered any respectable leadership on the war at the very time people were begging for leadership."

"Fulbright, Percy, and Case all turned down support of October 15," Mixner says. "Fulbright always felt more comfortable in an academic setting, as if he were the tenured professor for the whole war."

The doves wait for the people, and their consciences seem as profoundly affected by the waxing of the polls as the tides are by the spell of the moon. During the first Moratorium, according to Mixner, there was no problem getting support. Peace was high on the charts. "Before that," says Doug Ross, "the polls showed it to be a 50-50 issue. The idea was to wait. But it was quite easy to pick up a senator for the Moratorium, because pressure had started to build and there was no counterpressure yet." Over 100 congressmen signed up to speak.

About six months later, Mixner went back for similar endorsements: "In 1970, it was Earth Day, and we held demonstrations against the war on April 15. I couldn't get any more than 18 congressmen to speak. I went to a party and Gaylord Nelson was there. 'Why don't you come and work on Earth Day this spring,' he said. 'The issue is environment this year. You guys missed the boat.' "

Waiting for the people was, of course, another version of waiting for the President. He controlled the an-

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nouncements and the non-events on which the polls were based. "Between the Moratorium and Cambodia," says Doug Ross, "there was a regular cycle. We'd get some senators ready to hit out at him, and then he would make an announcement of some troop withdrawals or something. It threw them off, and the whole thing had to be started and gone through again. And when they were ready, Nixon would come out with something else. His timing was uncanny."

While senators often complained of lack of public opposition to the war, the pace of their antiwar bills was sometimes affected by too much peace activity—and their fear of being associated with it. The first Goodell bill went to the Foreign Relations Committee about the time of the October, 1969, Moratorium, and, according to Goodell, hearings on the bill were delayed for several months because Fulbright and others did not want their committee to be associated with the peace movement and its tint of possible violence. In a meeting of Senate doves held in June, 1970, Thomas Eagleton suggested they hurry the Hatfield-McGovern amendment to a vote, so that if they lost, it would occur before the students were back in school, thereby averting demonstrations.

They fell, in short, into the half-truth trap, out of a fear that if they told the whole truth, they would lose effectiveness. And yet the other side of the half-truth would always appear, demanding a whole new process of re-education, appeals, and rationales. Instead of emphasizing that ending the war will save all lives, for instance, doves jumped on the save American boys campaign because it had short-term effect. But now that Americans are coming home, they must go back and start again with the more difficult job of telling people that Asian lives count, too. Instead of emphasizing that negotiations are a waste of time when the positions of the two sides are fundamentally incompatible, they repeatedly called for the talks, which have now taken up almost three years. They harped on the costs of the war to gain support from the economy-minded, but discounted the fact that the costs could be reduced and the war continued. They preached anti-communism—saying that the war was an unwinnable way to stop the hordes—when many of them did not believe a communist takeover in Vietnam was worth fighting against.

In returning with new arguments, the antiwar senators have to struggle against the boredom of having gone through all this before and also against the credibility problem of the Pentagon—the public keeps hearing new reasons, it wonders what the real reasons are for why the war is opposed, much as it wonders about the real reasons why the war began.

The Curse of Reelection

The peace issue suffers the burden of being a moral question sponsored by politicians. The senators cannot provide the higher instincts of a Berrigan, while the cause itself does not call forth the lower instincts of a Bobby Baker, and peace is crushed somewhere in between by men who seek both the lower reaches of conscience and the two per cent margin of victory.

On the plane of the higher instincts, peace survives only on disinterested empathy, like the blacks did before voter registration. It is a precious commodity—too precious to be tested more than periodically against the grosser strengths of the political ego. The doves conserve their conscience, both outside and inside the Senate. The Goodell-Ottinger conflict—in which neither dove would let his feelings about the war interfere with his feelings about the other's election—is only a more public display of what has occurred at the few dove planning meetings, where cooperation is dismembered by contending political egos, where Eugene McCarthy can be ignored by all other Senate doves, none of whom would endorse him,

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even while Hue was burning to the ground, because they didn't like Gene. McCarthy verified his own credentials in this regard by retaliating in kind—ignoring the rest of the Senate for the remainder of his term.

Although the egos are strong, they are unable to survive without the six-year nourishment of reelection. Every two years, we hear that doveism cannot survive without the reelection of key antiwar senators, but paradoxically, it is reelection itself that insures the continuation of the war, for the doves moderate their antiwar activity to keep a hair on the positive side of 50 per cent.

Watching Kitty Genovese

There is a tendency for everyone to believe that the way to stop the war is to do more of what they are already doing. Magazines print more magazine articles, marchers plan more marches, and the public increases its correspondence to senators, who then edit the letters, make them into speeches, and read them back to the same people that wrote in. The tempo increases up and down the war assembly line, and each of us feels he can work harder for peace by serving his usual self-interests at the same time. Senators are perhaps the most susceptible to this, and if they delude themselves more than the rest of us it is only because they have greater power and believe that more of what they do will somehow stretch farther than more of what we do.

This doesn't mean that it is useless for senators to pass bills, but that the momentum of legislative machinery limits perspective on its importance. The recent Mansfield amendment is a good illustration. In other circumstances, passage of that amendment, which merely provides a withdrawal date but no cutoff of funds, would have been considered another significant victory in the long series of efforts to persuade the President. This time, however, Mansfield amended the draft bill, which was unsuccessfully filibustered by Gravel and Cranston in June. If the Mansfield amendment is diluted by a House-Senate conference, these two senators threaten to filibuster again, perhaps stopping the draft permanently.

Mansfield is important, then, only because it is riding on a guillotine that could immediately cut off the draftees from the military, and conferees who might have cavalierly gutted it are fearful that if they do, more senators will support the filibuster. But without the filibuster, Mansfield's amendment would have been another milestone on the road to nowhere.

The Senate doves' long willingness to take only short, testing, and collective steps into the bewilderness of the war could be understood only if the war were still a policy question, a matter of priorities and strategies on what Gravel calls "the great chessboard of life." The fact of the Senate's own participation in the killing has always been hidden in the decor-

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um and the appeals to the gentleman from Mississippi, so senators gasped in surprise when George McGovern referred last year to blood on these halls and when Gravel took the floor last December in what for the Senate amounted to blunt exchanges with Robert Dole about the guilt of all of them:

> Mr. Gravel: That is the fallacy of it all. That is the total fallacy. That is the total fallacy. When you kill, you kill; it makes no difference when and how you do it. . . .
>
> Mr. Dole: I am not killing anyone today.
>
> Mr. Gravel: Yes; the Senator is, and I am, too. Let us not kid ourselves that we can stand here and absolve ourselves of the bullets that fly, when we pay for them. When we appropriate the money, we are as much killers as the others. Let us not kid ourselves on that. And the Senator should not kid himself on that. We are all collectively guilty of what happened in My Lai.
>
> Mr. Dole: The Senator has some theories that the Senator from Kansas does not understand.
>
> Mr. Gravel: The Senator does not understand that when he votes today for $155 million, that the money is going down to the administration; that they are going to go to a factory with this money; that somebody is going to buy a box of ammunition; that somebody is going to take it to an airplane, put it on the airplane, that the airplane is going to fly to Southeast Asia, over Alaska, and land in Southeast Asia; that somebody will take the box of ammunition off and put it on a table; that a guy is going to come by, take some of the ammunition, put it in his pocket, walk over here, load his gun, and shoot another human being?
>
> Mr. Dole: Is that a question?
>
> Mr. Gravel: Yes.
>
> Mr. Dole: Well, the Senator from Kansas has heard not many statements in this Chamber, because he has only been in this Chamber for a couple of years, but he has heard statements to the effect that this Chamber reeks with blood, and has heard others say that perhaps it reeks with self-righteousness but not of blood.

The war is now a moral issue. As Ernest Gruening says: "I have no criticism of the senators in 1965, 1966, or even 1967 who were bamboozled by the Administration and their faith in its veracity and good will. But the thing has now become so foul and obscene and we see the Mylais."

The war's immorality puts the Senate doves in a different light. The Senate is a coequal part of the government. It must take positive action every year to keep the war going. It must pass the Defense budget, foreign military assistance, and all the requirements of war which are now seen as ritual assent to the Executive will. Without that assent, the war's legislative Ho Chi Minh trail would be blocked. In this context, it must be remembered that before 1971 no efforts had been undertaken by doves to stop the war from flowing through the Senate, that before the Gravel-Cranston filibuster of the draft bill in June, no attempt had been made to shake things up in the club.

The doves have succeeded, through word massage, of dissociating themselves and the Senate from the course of the war. They have succeeded in convincing people that they are the impotent prophets, committed to peace but lacking in strength, concerned about the war but certainly not responsible for it. However, in the context of the Senate's required assent to Vietnam, the doves become partners in crime. Their efforts at change, like George Ball's in the Johnson Administration, must be balanced carefully against the moral weight of their continued membership in the Senate, and their acceptance of its will. It is hard to decide at what point a courageous George Ball or George McGovern becomes one more bystander to the murder of Kitty Genovese, when the desire to change policy is overridden by participation in it.

Dove senators discovered the war long before they discovered their own participation in it. When their anguish came, they put it in the back rooms so they could be effective senators. But now a few doves like Gravel have begun to show that the total power of a few is far greater than the well-controlled power of the many, and that the only way to be an effective dove senator is to risk not being one. ■

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__ **Lessard, Suzannah**—"Gay Is Good for Us All"

__ **Moyers, Bill** (interviewed by Hugh Sidey)—"The White House Staff vs. the Cabinet"

__ **Rothchild, John**—"The Stories Reporters Don't Write"

__ **Slater, Philip E.**—"Spock-lash: Age, Sex, and Revolution"

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Memo of the Month

U.S. INFORMATION AGENCY
WASHINGTON, D.C.

ANNOUNCEMENT
June 18, 1971

EMPLOYEE SUGGESTION PROGRAM CHANGES

Agency regulations for the administration of the Employee Suggestion Program have been changed to encourage and facilitate employee participation. These are important things to remember about the Suggestion Program:

1. You may submit your suggestion directly to the Employee Suggestion Coordinator in IOA/M. You need not submit your suggestion through your supervisor or the administrative channels of your office.
2. You may ask the Suggestion Coordinator for an "anonymous evaluation" of your suggestion. Whether you submit your suggestion directly to the Suggestion Program or through your supervisor, you need only send a separate memorandum to the Suggestion Coordinator asking that your identity not be revealed to the evaluators of your suggestion. You do not need to give any reason for requesting an anonymous evaluation.
3. You may submit your suggestion in a memorandum. Suggestion forms are provided at various locations throughout Agency buildings. If forms are temporarily not available or if you cannot find forms to use, send a memorandum with your suggestion to the Suggestion Coordinator, IOA/M.
4. Your job does not prevent you from suggesting. If your suggestion relates to your job you still should submit it. Supervisors should never stop a suggestion. The Suggestion Program and the evaluators will determine the relationship between your suggestion and your job, as well as any award you are entitled to if the suggestion is adopted. If you are a supervisor--suggest--nothing prevents your use of the Suggestion Program.

The Suggestion Program is one of the Agency's management improvement programs. Management improvements are always possible. You know your own job and may know, better than anyone else, ways of doing it better.

We are looking for ideas which contribute directly to economy, saving money, manhours, material, supplies and equipment; or ideas which carry out specific operations, producing useful changes in operating policy or procedures, improving the quality of a product, activity or program. The Agency welcomes active support and participation in the Suggestion Program by all employees.

Ideas for employee benefits and services that can be corrected through normal procedures should be submitted for customary administrative action. Ideas concerning routine safety matters should be submitted to the Agency Safety Officer in IOA/S. All other suggestions go to the Suggestion Program.

The complete regulations and award computation tables for the Employee Suggestion Program are found in the MOA, Part II, Section 490. TL-1664D & 994F (12/15/70) is the most current revision. You can review specific MOA regulations in your administrative office. Specific questions about the Suggestion Program may be telephoned to the Coordinator in IOA/M, x-24977.

THINK! PARTICIPATE! SUGGEST! SUGGEST! SUGGEST!

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Testimony from the War's Trigger End

by Robert Bowie Johnson, Jr.
with Mike Betzold

One of the men said that there was an old woman and a child back there who were preparing rice. And I know I saw them. Now when we walked in I saw them.

And he said, 'Shall we go back and do a job on them?' And the Captain just nodded his head. So they went back, seven or eight men in the squad, and these men were rather bitter, like their friends had been killed, and they went back and threw the old woman and the child down the well and threw two grenades in on top of them.

Now you see as soon as this happened, the vill[age] was designated as an enemy vill. So we started destroying the food, burning the hooches, and killing the cattle, and that was just general policy. Like we did that all the time. . . . These are things that happen every day.

As Gary Battles, formerly of the Americal Division in Vietnam, testified about a whole series of incidents like this one, reporters seemed noticeably bored. Congressman Ronald V. Dellums was chairing the third day of a four-day ad hoc hearing this April on U. S. war crimes in Vietnam, and there had been little hard news. One wire service writer, anxious to meet his deadline, nudged me to ask whether anything "heavier" than Battles' story would be revealed. His patience was soon rewarded by the testimony of Daniel Notley, who described the massacre of 30 Vietnamese civilians in the village of Troung Khan II on April 18, 1969. Notley's emotional and articulate account overshadowed the droning, mundane tales of two dozen other veterans, and reports of "another Mylai" dominated press coverage.

The veterans could not get across their message that small Mylais are normal in Vietnam, because the press was more interested in the unusual and bizarre. It is not news when a company kills a few civilians a day for 30 days—but a massacre of 30 innocents in one day is. Somewhere in between, there is a macabre dividing line between what can and cannot credibly

Robert Bowie Johnson, Jr., a 1965 graduate of West Point, served a year in Vietnam as an infantry captain. He is now a coordinator of the Citizens Commission of Inquiry. Mike Betzold was an intern at The Washington Monthly *this spring.*

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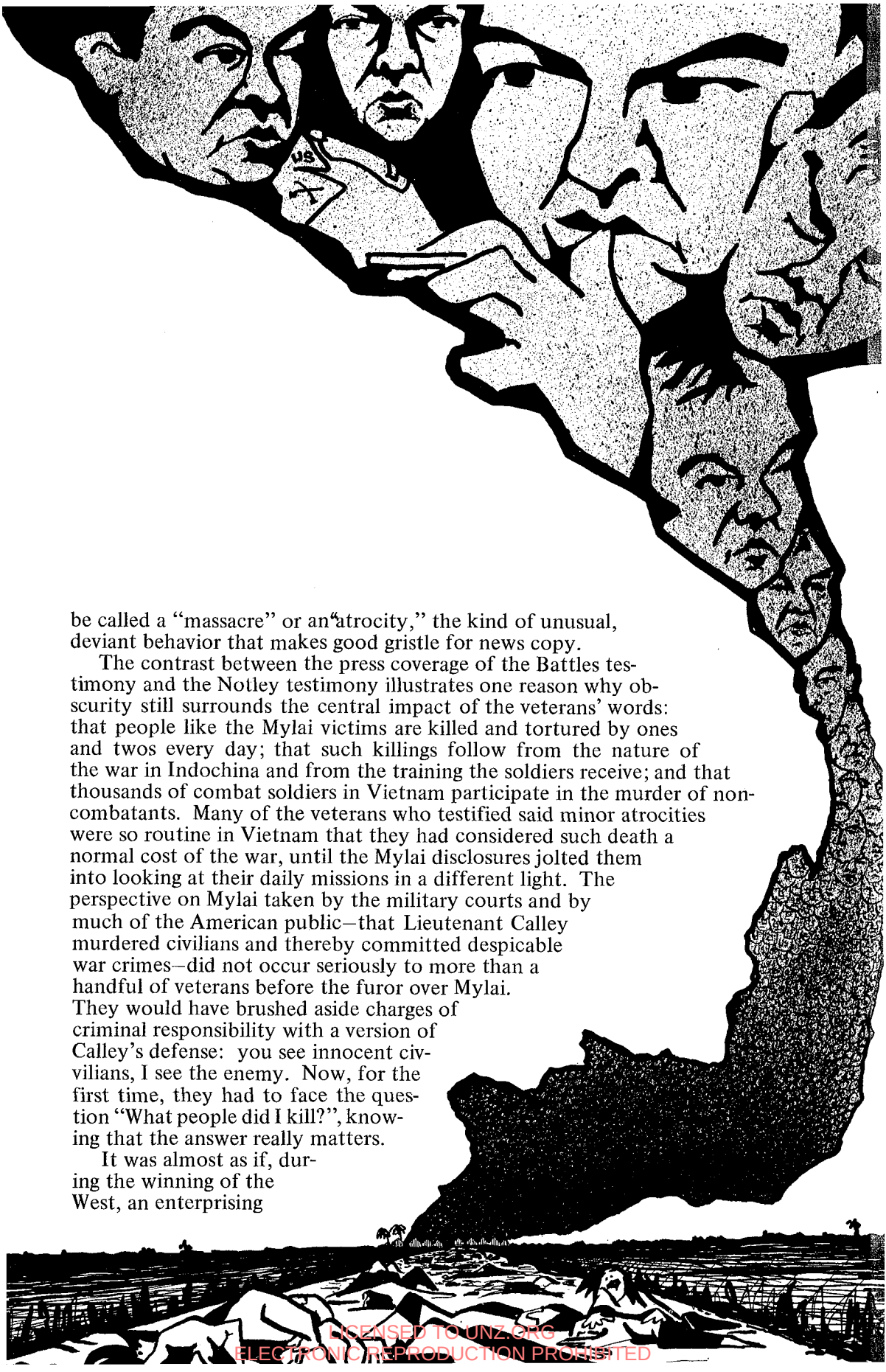

be called a "massacre" or an "atrocity," the kind of unusual, deviant behavior that makes good gristle for news copy.

The contrast between the press coverage of the Battles testimony and the Notley testimony illustrates one reason why obscurity still surrounds the central impact of the veterans' words: that people like the Mylai victims are killed and tortured by ones and twos every day; that such killings follow from the nature of the war in Indochina and from the training the soldiers receive; and that thousands of combat soldiers in Vietnam participate in the murder of noncombatants. Many of the veterans who testified said minor atrocities were so routine in Vietnam that they had considered such death a normal cost of the war, until the Mylai disclosures jolted them into looking at their daily missions in a different light. The perspective on Mylai taken by the military courts and by much of the American public—that Lieutenant Calley murdered civilians and thereby committed despicable war crimes—did not occur seriously to more than a handful of veterans before the furor over Mylai. They would have brushed aside charges of criminal responsibility with a version of Calley's defense: you see innocent civilians, I see the enemy. Now, for the first time, they had to face the question "What people did I kill?", knowing that the answer really matters.

It was almost as if, during the winning of the West, an enterprising

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"Congressmen who felt comfortable calling the war immoral on the high plane of policy could not accept the soldiers'-eye view of that immorality."

journalist had reported a particular slaughter of Indians in such excruciating detail that public pressure forced the cavalry to try one of its officers for murder. The renowned Indian fighter would have been hard pressed to sort out the contradictions surrounding his activity. He knew that his fellow citizens, at the abstract level of manifest destiny, considered it glorious, or at least necessary, to conquer the territory and to show the Indians that they must abide by our ways. But he would have been told also that it was a heinous, forbidden crime to kill people like the victims of the convicted cavalry officer. The frontier analogy is imperfect but instructive, for many of the veterans who testified, stunned by the implications of the standard set for Lt. Calley, decided painfully that Vietnam *is* Mylais in essence—perhaps smaller and less methodical, but inevitable and in principle the same. In any case, there would have been no hearings on U. S. conduct in Vietnam without the Calley trial, which changed soldiers' thinking like things would have changed if Custer had been tried and condemned while he was still winning.

If the press avoided the veterans' testimony because it lacked flair and focused on regularities, most congressmen refused to pay attention because they did not want to consider the possibility that the average American combat soldier might commit murder in Vietnam. On top of the other soured purposes and costs of the war, it would be too much for them to face the idea that they had voted to send draftees and volunteers into a war which demanded, and even encouraged, the slaughter of the very people in whose name the U. S. fought. Congress' fierce resistance to hearing their story indicates the thick psychological blinders the country has against questioning its virtue. Some of the most antiwar congressmen, such as Rep. Robert Leggett of California, persisted in believing that the veterans were "misfits," who lacked the moral character to discriminate between the innocent peasant and the Viet Cong. Congressmen who felt comfortable calling the war immoral on the high plane of policy could not accept the soldiers'-eye view of that immorality, which requires that the soldiers carry memories of the buffalo boys, fleeting figures, young suspects, potential grenade throwers, and suspicious gooks which they shot.

The veterans spoke only of actions they committed or saw committed in order to preserve their extremely high credibility. It was difficult for them to recount their Vietnam experiences, because they often felt a piercing sense of guilt about them. The temptation to privately strangle this feeling of guilt like thousands of other GIs was very strong. (Danny Notley did not even tell his wife of the massacre at Troung Khan II until the night before his testimony). The misfit label made testimony even more painful, for the veterans were singled out as deviate murderers by the liberals and as heroes by conservatives—both of which views seemed coarsely ignorant to people who had experienced Vietnam. In many cases, witnesses also had to overcome fear of being prosecuted as war criminals.

The veterans who testified before Rep. Dellums' ad hoc committee were unusual only because they had weathered the personal, political, and possibly criminal obstacles against their appearance. Their story is instructive because it shows that, in addition to all the other scars of Vietnam, we will be left with hundreds of thousands of

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"It is not news when a company kills a few civilians a day for 30 days—but a massacre of 30 innocents in one day is."

very strung out, undone veterans, who killed before they were 21 and thought about it later. In the aftermath of a repudiated war and a condemned Lt. Calley, many veterans will live with the realization that they had a few victims like his. Some will speak out, others will smolder and wrestle with themselves.

The veterans at the Dellums hearings were long-haired and crew-cut, weak-looking and tough. Their words ranged from cautious self-assurance to nervous mumbles to emotional tirades. Their political views ranged from revolutionary to conservative. Some had given up hope in America, but most still believed in the dream. Most found it hard to shake the training, the background that had provided the survival tools and military thinking for their tour. Their lives had been shaped, used, and, had not luck prevailed, would have been tossed away; instead, they gradually gained a realization they wanted to share.

One Who Didn't Come

The Dellums hearings were brought about by a veterans' group called the Citizens Committee of Inquiry on U. S. War Crimes in Vietnam (CCI). In early 1970, Tod Ensign and Jeremy Rifkin began working to establish local commissions of inquiry in communities across the United States. I testified at the first inquiry, at Annapolis, Maryland in March of 1970 and subsequently went to work full time for the Citizens Commission. During 1970, local hearings were also held in Toronto; Springfield, Massachusetts; New York; Los Angeles; Boston; Baltimore; Buffalo; Richmond; Portland, Oregon; Minneapolis; and Philadelphia. These local hearings culminated in the National Veterans Inquiry, held in Washington during the first week in December, 1970. Over 50 veterans illuminated nearly every aspect of the war, and the CCI took great pains to insure that its witnesses were legitimate. One or two ringers would have destroyed its credibility.

After the National Veterans Inquiry, the CCI wavered for a time about what to do with the volumes of veterans' testimony then amassed and reported, albeit spottily, in the national media. Perhaps out of an understandable need, millions of people still believed that Mylai was an isolated incident. The CCI needed a new approach, and, without optimism, the group turned to Congress. A small number of representatives, led by Bob Eckhardt, petitioned the appropriate committee chairmen for an investigation of American war conduct. House Armed Services Committee Chairman F. Edward Hebert replied in character. Although he had a copy of the transcript of the Washington hearings, he wrote to Eckhardt on March 9: "I presume of course that you have reference to the crimes committed by the North Vietnamese and the Viet Cong against the people of the Republic of South Vietnam and against American troops." After being rebuffed in similar fashion for more than two months by the standing committees of Congress, the CCI went to black freshman Congressman Dellums, who moved ahead with ad hoc hearings, realizing that the House Armed Services Committee would never act on the matter because war crimes are too hot for most congressmen, especially for those on the military committees that have trumpeted the war most loudly.

Dellums had not intended the hearings to be lopsided, as he explained: "When we began these hearings we requested the presence of all of the

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Joint Chiefs of Staff from 1965 to 1967, who refused to come. We invited the National Security Council from 1965 to 1967, they did not come. And we invited the foreign policy advisors back several years, who chose not to come. We also invited all of the generals whose names may have been mentioned. . . ."

Military officials not only declined to appear at the Dellums hearings but they prevented some active duty soldiers from appearing as well. One of these, Lieutenant Colonel Anthony B. Herbert, would have brought with him impressive credentials. He was the most decorated enlisted man in the Korean War. He was chosen by General Matthew Ridgeway as the best American soldier in that war. After achieving the highest score ever attained at the Ranger School in 1952, he received his ranger tab on national TV from Senator Lyndon Johnson.

The organizers of the Dellums hearings asked Herbert to testify, and he wanted to do so. Permission was requested in writing well in advance. The Pentagon delayed its response as long as possible, then simply refused—for good reason.

Colonel Herbert, who was a battalion commander in the 173rd Airborne Brigade, would have testified to what many others had seen—systematic electrical torture, water torture applied by Vietnamese National Field Police in the presence of American officers, and so on. But he would have said more. He would have described the massacre on St. Valentine's day of 1969 by the Tan Quan District Provincial Reconnaissance Unit (PRU) under an American advisor. Herbert came on the scene of the incident and found about 20 Vietnamese soldiers in the process of killing 15 POWs. One of the soldiers was slitting the throat of a Vietnamese woman as her two-year-old child clung to her leg. Four POWs already were dead. Herbert stopped the executions and reported what had happened to the brigade executive officer, Colonel J. Ross Franklin, who was later to sit on the Peers Commission (which conducted the Army's investigation of Mylai). Herbert demanded that the remaining 10 prisoners be taken from the PRU. Franklin declined and ordered Herbert to turn them over to the PRU, which he refused to do. But after Herbert's departure, the reconnaissance unit murdered the rest of the POWs.

On March 28, 1969, Herbert went to see Brigadier General John W. Barnes to pressure him and Franklin to investigate the total of eight separate war-crime incidents he had witnessed and reported. The next morning he was called to Barnes' office, summarily replaced, and sent to Saigon.

On March 12, 1971, Colonel Herbert became fed up with the Army's reluctance to investigate. From Fort McPherson he formally charged Colonel Franklin and newly promoted Major General Barnes with covering up war crimes. The Army assigned Major Carl E. Hensley from the Army's Criminal Investigation Division (CID) to investigate Herbert's allegations. At first, Hensley told Herbert he would prove him a liar. But as his investigations proceeded his attitude began to change. On April 3, he called Herbert and told him he knew what crimes had been committed, that he was going to level with his boss, CID chief Colonel Henry H. Tufts, and that he had "better get some results." Colonel Tufts was not altogether receptive to Major Hensley's new concern for the truth. Tufts sent Hensley to the hospital head shrinker for a "psychiatric evaluation." Hensley's first therapeutic session was to have been on April 17. But on April 16 Major Hensley, married, with six children, shot himself to death.

Herbert's testimony would have tied the command to the policy in one case at least—but he was not allowed to testify, and the Army kept hourly watch on him at Fort McPherson during the hearings. Bereft of the prestige accorded the standing committees of Congress, the ad hoc proceedings were sparsely attended and scarcely no-

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ticed, at least until Danny Notley unveiled his large-scale atrocity. But despite the lack of recognition, the message of the discharged soldiers was clear.

They Chewed Betel Nuts

The central theme of the veterans' stories was the total failure of all levels of military command in Vietnam to distinguish between friend and foe. The distinction was normally made post facto. "In my unit," testified one veteran, "anyone who was dead, he was considered a VC. If we shot anyone down, he was always considered a VC, whether it was a child, woman, or military male. We never questioned the fact." Witness after witness supported this view, and the testimony as a whole provided insights for two crucial questions: why such widespread and regular killing of civilians takes place, and how the soldiers mentally accommodate themselves to live with that reality.

The veterans blamed indiscriminate killing partly on their training, which they said provided incentive to shoot at almost everything in sight. Military training, which builds a raw killer instinct and a hatred for the enemy in order to develop discipline and courage under fire, has never been touted as fostering man's humane and intellectual side. But realists have always had a case that such training is required for warfare and serves its purposes well by ending conflicts as rapidly as possible. In Vietnam, however, military training does not serve the stated purposes of the war. It teaches recruits to hate *all* Vietnamese, playing heavily on their foreign appearance and strange habits. It is simplemindedly aggressive in a very complicated war. It is a further impetus to the wholesale killing of peasants, instead of a counterweight to the host of other factors working against the protection of civilians. Ken Campbell, a forward observer for an artillery battalion, emphasized the duality of his military instruction:

I went into the Marine Corps to go to Vietnam specifically. . . . I wanted to fight for my country. I wanted to keep communism from spreading. . . . Then when I went to Vietnam I found out that a lot of the things I was taught in FO [Forward Observer] *school were supposed to be disregarded, to throw away the book. I was never taught anything about the Geneva Convention as far as the use of artillery goes. It was constantly blow away this, blow away that. . . . The people who instructed us were noncommissioned officers, and most, if not all, were Vietnam veterans. And they would train us by the book as far as the class goes, they would tell us all of these little points the book says. Then they would turn around and tell us stories, their stories, which did not quite go along with what they taught us. They would tell us stories of blowing away civilians, of what to expect in Vietnam, and they would always refer to the Vietnamese as gooks, and slanty eyes and dinks. And we got the overall picture, at least I did, and I believe most of the other guys got the impression, you know, you cannot trust anybody, and as long as nobody is watching to be hard, tough, and to have no feeling, blow them away. It was always blow them away.*

The real Army education would come after class, when the trainees would ask the vet to tell them "what it's really like over there." "I remember a man," Gary Battles testified, "he was an E-8[Master Sergeant], I believe it was, who demonstrated different ways of making sure that people were dead. He didn't only kill them, he told us how you could assure that they were dead. He told us how to take your fingers—and if you were double-jointed it was much better—but if you could extend your fingers and bend them back and down, and gouge a person's eyes out, that this was a way that you could tell he was dead. He told us how to crack the rib cage and pull the heart out of a man."

Fear and frustrating uncertainty reinforce the mistrust and hatred for

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"But the feeling of the guys was that killing was nothing. It was like going and locking your car door."

Vietnamese. The soldier has been taught to hate the sly pajama-clad Asian. Ken Campbell:

We hated these people, we were taught to hate these people. They were gooks, slants, dinks, they were orientals, inferior to us, they chewed betel nuts, they were ugly, you know, they ate lice out of each other's hair, they were not as good as us. And you could not trust them. I did not think it was racist then, but I certainly do now. We just hated the whole people. They were all gooks. . . .

Breakfast and the Religion

In speaking of their training, the men realized that the war and all its attitudes had been drilled into their heads before they ever got to Vietnam. Dan Barnes, an infantryman with the Americal Division, recalled that "even before you sat down to eat your meals, you had to stand up and scream 'Kill' before you could sit down and eat." And Gary Battles said: "I had respect for the United States of America and respect for the Army and I was just—I just went by what I was told. So I went into the Army. The first thing I noticed in the Army was like marching around and singing songs about killing, and I saw signs around certain places that said 'Viet Cong—Breakfast of Champions.'"

The need to vent rage on an elusive enemy is pervasive in Vietnam, even to the point that U. S. soldiers, itching for some "action," resort to childish and cruel vengeance upon the people and their meager possessions. William Toffling, a member of the Americal Division's 11th Brigade, testified:

I remember one time we went into a village and we got some bamboo poles and we turned the pigs loose, and with the sharpened poles we killed them Someone was at the other end of the village and they were chasing the ducks and the chickens out of the cages, and smashing them . . . . Everyone got on the truck, and they collected rocks and anything they could to throw at the people and as we went through the village they were throwing the rocks at the civilians. I remember one instance when this happened and I remember it was a mamasan who was hit in the head with a rock and she was killed.

On the third day of the hearings, nine former members of the Americal Division testified to incident after incident of disregard on the soldiers' part regarding which particular Vietnamese they hurt and killed. Many veterans spoke in lowered voices and a resigned monotone about a war they still could not comprehend. Dan Barnes:

We went into this village and an old man was sitting there, he was inside and he was about 70 or 80, and he was dressed in white clothes. He was the only man in the village that I saw and I went in with another guy, started tearing things down off the wall and things and naturally the old man protested. Now this other guy pushed the old man away and shot him in the head. . . . But the feeling of the guys was that the killing was nothing. It was nothing to them. It was like going and locking your car door."

When GIs did express qualms about what they were doing, superiors tried to beat back these reservations with authoritarian lectures on the duty of a soldier and about how real men can live with the fact that war is hell. And sometimes chaplains tried to impart comfort for the military mission with compassionate understanding. For example, infantryman Guad-

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"The distinction between friend and foe was normally made post facto. 'In my unit,' testified one veteran, 'anyone who was dead was considered a VC.' "

alupe Villereal's personal confrontation with guilt reads like a passage from *Catch-22*:

I sort of can't be dramatic about it because it just happened. Nothing was ever said. Nothing was ever questioned. . . . There was. . . one particular woman and that for some reason she was walking along, half running, across a dike and she was shot. I personally—I guess I took part personally in the firing only because you were told to. You were told, "Here, you got to do it." Everybody was shooting, and if you were not to do it, you know, they were yelling, "What the hell you doing there?" That was the method. Anyway when we checked her out it turned out she was an old woman. At the time it struck me because I really thought for somehow, some reason I was personally responsible in this incident. It happened with a resupply shipment, and on that day the battalion chaplain came in and had services for the guys at which time I went up to talk to him and I said that it was kind of—I was kind of guilty and I wanted to talk to somebody about it. Suddenly I felt, I really felt bad and all he said was, "Well, we all see things in war that we don't like, that we don't want to see." And he said, "Well, could you help it?" And I told him that yes, I could, I guess I could. Maybe I shouldn't have shot. And he says, "Well, it could have been VC, right?" And I said, "Yes, it could have been." But he sort of rationalized it away and he gave me the statement of "Let's pray to God that he will give us courage and strength to carry on with the mission." Now this upset my thinking with the religion.

Killing Fish in a Barrel

When killing is inescapable, the mind must be soothed somehow from constant dwelling on the fears and the doubts and the remembered details. The high consumption of drugs and alcohol in Indochina is evidence of one path to ease the extra strain of this war. There are also many official military practices which encourage a more detached view of the realities. The emphasis on body count, for example, stimulates the indiscriminate killing of Vietnamese, and also makes the process a kind of depersonalized numbers game which is taken for granted and approved in Indochina. The slaughter of people is defined in terms of competition between squads and battalions. Body count becomes a pervasive mentality and a justification for otherwise immoral actions in a strange war. David Locke, who spent 18 months as an infantryman in Vietnam, showed how the attitude was carried out in the field:

When we caught up to them we fired at them. One was killed—he wasn't really killed he was shot through the shoulder and through the jaw. He was wounded. We stopped and called the Colonel and told him we had one wounded dink, you know, and that we wanted him to send a chopper. The Colonel says, "Is that what I heard you say? Wounded?"

And the Sergeant said, "No." And they blew his head off. Before we left on this mission the captain of the company had told us definitely do not take any prisoners. He wanted a body count.

Body counts and similar criteria have always been legitimate, if grisly, measures for performance in wars—with a kind of inevitable bounty-hunter attitude produced because promotions, medals, and prestige all rest on the body counts. In Vietnam, the process is further rotted by the fact

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that the body count mania means additional killing of the civilians we are supposed to be protecting. The demand for high kills comes down from the highest levels of the military. Ron Bartek, a 1966 graduate of West Point, served under General Julian J. Ewell, then Field Force commander for about half of South Vietnam, and sat in on top-level strategy meetings. At the Dellums hearings, he described what went on at one of them:

At Ewell's first commanders' conference he had the division commander, the brigade commander and all the battalion commanders, and I was representing my battalion commander. He spent about 30 minutes giving his formula for success. He began by saying that his unit was only killing, and these are his words, only killing 2,000 of these little bastards a month, and they were infiltrating 4,000. Consequently, by the end of that month, which I believe was February of 1969, he wanted to begin killing 4,000 of these little bastards a month and then by the end of the following month wanted to kill 6,000. Now, this is at a time, as I said, 1969, when we had officially steered away from our concept of a military victory and started emphasizing pacification, and yet there was no mention of either of those two programs.

The competition at all levels to "produce" is keenly felt. Greg Hayward, a West Point captain who was wounded three times, testified that General Ewell's division "amassed an unsurpassed record of body count, and it was based on lies. And everybody in the unit knew it. He would claim kills at night, with his sniper teams firing with infra-red scopes at 600 meters. General Ewell was promoted above several officers to the job of II Field Force commander, and he used the term killing fish in a barrel, and that is how he described several operations, and I personally heard him talk about killing fish in a barrel. He put great emphasis on this body count. It seems ironic that General Ewell is our military representative to the Paris Peace Talks."

But it was not only General Ewell who lived for body count. Hayward and Bartek testified that his subordinate commanders carried out plans for the systematic artillery bombardment of hospital installations in Cambodia.

The body-count mania is not a rare psychological disease perceived only by super-humanists and doves. It is an actual military performance indicator, formalized in Vietnam by combat scorecards like the one below. Lt. Col. Herbert provided this particular tabsheet, which covers the March, 1969,

March 1969
MANEUVER BATTALIONS

INDICATOR		1/503	2/503	3/503	4/503	1/50
BC + 5 X POW Contacts	X 200	157	710	148	338	56
Per cent 1st term reenlistments	X 100	107	80	111	0	100
		264	790	259	338	156
AWOL X 3		66	9	30	42	6
DR X 2		56	32	28	112	6
Accident X 3		27	9	3	9	12
Malaria X 5		35	15	70	85	10
Narcotics X 5		30	30	90	30	5
Art. 15 X 1		50	3	41	35	21
Sum. Ct. X 2		4	0	2	0	2
Spec. Ct. X 3		30	12	9	15	0
Gen. Ct. X 15		0	0	0	0	0
		298	110	273	328	62

RECAP

1	2/503	790 - 110	= +680
2	1/50	156 - 62	= + 94
3	4/503	338 - 328	= + 10
4	3/503	259 - 273	= - 14
5	1/503	264 - 298	= - 34

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record of five battalions of the 173rd Airborne. Herbert himself commanded the 2nd Battalion of the 503rd Infantry. The tabulating system requires commanders to feed statistics for body count (BC), prisoners (POW), enemy contacts, and per cent of first-term reenlistments into a mathematical formula for the plus side of combat effectiveness. From the derived positive score, they substracted such negatives as the number of AWOLs, delinquency reports (DR), accidents, malaria cases, narcotics charges, and disciplinary actions ranging from "Article 15s" (under which a soldier facing court-martial is induced to settle for an out-of-court punishment or pay cut), through Summary, Special, and General Courts-Martial. All these minuses are multiplied by coefficients which are chosen to reflect their relative importance as detractors from maximum effectiveness. The overall negative score is then subtracted from the overall positive score (primarily body count) for a composite performance indicator. The March, 1969, "recap" shows that Herbert's battalion finished solidly in first place.

Other Anesthetics

If the body count mania helps soldiers think of Vietnamese as numbers, the free-fire-zone concept makes dead peasants seem like misplaced objects. Free-fire zones are wide areas designated as enemy territory, thus rationalizing any killing that takes place there. According to David Bressem, who lost an eye and part of a leg while piloting a helicopter gunship: "In a free-fire zone you could fire upon anyone and anything. We had instructions to shoot anything that moves. We would go out in an area, and if we saw chickens, we would shoot chickens. If we saw water buffalo, we would shoot them." This treatment of the Vietnamese and their water buffalo is reminiscent of some history on our own continent—the troops often call a free-fire zone "Indian country."

Curfew times are set up as another short-cut for deciding who the enemy is. As Thomas Cole remarked, "These people didn't carry wrist watches," so many times peasants are gunned down for being tardy by our rules.

There was also testimony regarding the air war—the last-stand strategy in Indochina. Randy Floyd flew bombing raids in North and South Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia. His Laotian operations were camouflaged under the euphemism, "armed reconnaissance," which "was not at all reconnaissance. . . .It was in effect a free-drop zone." Floyd used map coordinates to drop his bomb loads, and "normally we never checked a map to see where they landed. And small variations in airspeed or small errors in his timing telling me when to drop or my delay could cause a great error in where the bombs hit. It was not uncommon also to have a section of A6s carrying 56 500-pound bombs, to drop these on a suspected sniper. It was kind of a standard joke." According to Floyd, the pilots were instructed not to waste ordnance. Unused payloads had to be dropped somewhere and often landed on villages.

Fred Branfman testified after Randy Floyd. His voluminous documentation of the air war in Laos gives some idea of the destructive impact such tactics have on a civilian population. Extensive bombing has been practiced over South Vietnam for many years.

It is fitting in a way that the United States has moved toward an almost exclusive reliance on the air war in the last three years, for the air war is a kind of final distillation which reveals both our ultimate motives in Indochina and the blindness to civilian murders that the veterans' testimony centered upon. Advocates of bombing and technological warfare usually put forth little pretense that their strategy will build popular support among the Vietnamese or win the minds and hearts of the people. Bombing is a strategy that builds nothing for the long run, but it does prevent the concentration of enemy forces and the

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"In addition to the other scars of Vietnam, we will be left with thousands of undone veterans, who killed before they were 21, and thought about it later."

consolidation of their gains. It is designed not to win, but keep from losing. As the Pentagon Papers have begun to make clear, avoiding the humiliation and political liabilities of final defeat has always been our prime motive in Vietnam. The emerging air strategy is an implicit admission of this fact. It shows our willingness to avoid defeat even at the expense of the very people we are rhetorically committed to protect. It produces even more dead civilians than the ground war below, but in an airborne fashion which reduces American casualties and removes the soldiers from the troubling, close-up view of their frequent civilian victims. As such, the air war is a grotesque extension of the policy "outcomes" that brought the veterans to Washington.

Once civilian killings are seen as the logical result of American policies, the nature of the war, and our attitudes toward the people who live where the war is, even the "standard," newsworthy war crimes—such as the torturing of prisoners, and soldiers gone berserk—become impossible to write off as the necessary price of all war. The torture of prisoners is common in Vietnam, and the veterans testified about it, too.

Steve Noetzel, now with the AT&T management, served with the Special Forces in 1963-64. He told of public displays of electric torture, declaring that the use of field telephones for torture was widespread even eight years ago. The procedure was short and to the point: "Hook up the wires to the neck, arms, and genitals, ring 'em up, and they're sure to answer. This was known as the Bell Telephone Hour." An alternative method he witnessed once: "We put the Viet Cong prisoners in a room with a python. We could hear screaming all night." The ingenuity of the interrogators was endless. One suspect was baked in a barbed-wire coffin all day and sprayed with an insect-attracting chemical at night. In the middle of a small hamlet, an old man and a small boy were hooked up to field telephones attached to a tape recorder. As townspeople looked on, "We told the Vietnamese that the Sergeant's tape recorder was actually a lie detector. Untruthful answers were met with shocks to the sensitive parts of the body."

Kenneth Barton Osborn, now a graduate student at American University, was a military intelligence officer, an agent handler, a spy in Vietnam. He lived under cover in the I Corps area with the agent nets that he recruited and operated were responsible for targeting enemy units and Viet Cong infrastructure. The information he obtained was laterally distributed to American combat units and CIA functionaries of the Phoenix program. In following up the effectiveness of his agent reports, Osborn observed the resultant interrogation of targeted Vietnamese suspects. On two occasions, he was present when a Marine team conducted heliborne interrogations. Two prisoners would be taken for a ride—one to be questioned and one who no longer served a useful intelligence function, a "dummy." The dummy would be interrogated, intimidated, and finally thrown out. This motivated the targeted suspect to volunteer any information the interrogators wished to hear. Another time Osborn saw a prisoner killed during questioning by insertion of six-inch dowels into the man's ears, which were then tapped through to the brain. The suspect was determined not to be a Viet Cong.

Osborn's most valuable informant, a multilingual Chinese woman, whom

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"After a repudiated war and a condemned Lt. Calley, many veterans will live with the realization that they had a few victims like his."

he had to trust in order to maintain contact with his agents, since his own training in Vietnamese culture was nonexistent, was shot in Osborn's front yard by a captain who had misgivings about her loyalty. The captain's only explanation for his summary action was that "she was only a slope, anyway." Osborn explained that he had no means of protesting this murder, since his own presence in Vietnam was illegal and his superiors would automatically deny any knowledge of his actions.

The Anguish of Looking Back

It is hard for a noncombatant to understand the nature of the war, who gets killed, and the motivations of the people involved. Soldiers land in Vietnam with a mixture of viewpoints and experiences in their heads: general myths like "Asians don't value human life, anyway"; old attitudes about communism, evil, and patriotism; fresh memories of military training and discipline; old war stories from parents; and a vague feeling that war is a grisly but critical watershed in growing up, a kind of final test. Unlike civilians, however, the young soldiers run into the reality of combat in Vietnam with these ideas still swimming in their minds, like shapeless pieces of wood hitting a buzz saw. Terry Mullen, an infantryman with the Americal Division, testified about the immediacy of the war for the recruit and how it pushes other thoughts into the background:

Before you know it you get orders for Vietnam. And then everything bursts open. Right away you hit Vietnam and the rockets start coming in and you find out it's the real thing, you know?

And then you've got to make a decision. You have to go along with it over there, to live, or else you can't make it. Any moral questions in your mind about the whole thing, you just have to put those out of your mind because the fact is they ask you to do it and it's the real thing. So you go along with this for awhile and you just can't ask any questions. For instance, as soon as I got in the field I was scared stiff. I didn't know what I was going to do or what was going on. All I could think of was that I had to learn what they were doing, which I couldn't question if it was good or bad. So I went along with it and right away I could see those guys, the only thing was they were all depressed and angry, and it's just something you can't put your finger on.

The more dinks you kill, goes the motto, the more safe it is for you, and the sooner you get to going home. So you went along with it. You couldn't question it. . . .

It's the shock treatment you get when you go in the Army and they put it to you, "You do this or you're going to die. If you follow our rules, good or bad, it's going to assure you a ticket home". . . .

In such a mess, the soldier kills whatever looks like it might be the enemy or whatever everybody else is killing. He feels that it is necessary, or, as Gary Battles told Congressman Benjamin Rosenthal, he just does it:

Rep. Rosenthal. . . . How do you think it's possible that American boys can do the things you told us about?

Mr. Battles. Well it's a way of life.

Rep. Rosenthal. How can they kill women and children?

Mr. Battles. Well it's a way of life in Vietnam from the time you get there. I didn't want to do the things I did. I didn't want to participate. I was following orders though. If you are in the front squad and they say,

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"Disperse," and you get on line, and you fire at people running, you know, that's your job. If you are an infantryman that is your job.

Only rare soldiers are prepared to examine their Vietnam experiences in an effort to figure out what was right and wrong. Most veterans, with varying success, try to forget the war as a dog-eat-dog encounter of little choice, for which reexamination is of no use. Although a disorienting experience like Vietnam hardly inspires the self-confidence required for honest reflection and firm conclusions, those who testified tried to make such an evaluation. In that sense alone, I suppose we were unusual. Ken Campbell described for Rep. Jonathan Bingham the agonizing process by which a veteran questions the morality of what he has done:

Rep. Bingham. . . . I gather from what you say, sir, that at the time you were engaged in these activities you saw nothing wrong in it; is that correct?

Mr. Campbell: No, I thought everything was right about it. I mean the people who instructed me. . . had been in combat, they had experienced it all. And, like, these people were on a pedestal, I looked up to them. And I believed everything they told me. I figured this was, you know, another way of stopping communism, and protecting my country, and I felt nothing wrong with it except there was one time at the end of that second mission I called in on the second village that I began wondering what am I doing? You know. It went through my mind, what am I doing? and it shook me for awhile and my radioman, who I had become very close to, never said anything, but he just stared at me and the look on his face, you know, the idea that he conveyed to me was the same question I had, what are you doing?

And this rattled me, but going back to the old Marine Corps idea of being hard, I just pushed it to the back of my mind. I knew I could not think about it too long or else I would not be hard anymore, I would not be one of the elite killers anymore if I started having feelings.

Rep. Bingham: When did you become convinced that this was wrong? What were the circumstances of that? Was that after you left Vietnam?

Mr. Campbell: I did not admit it to myself that the whole thing was wrong, not just the calling in of artillery on that specific village, but the whole gig in Vietnam was wrong, until well after I was back from Vietnam. It was preying on me all of the time, you know, it would constantly come up in my mind, questions, doubts. And I was able to keep pushing them back into the back of my mind. But they kept growing and kept nagging at my mind more and more until finally I started running into other people who had the same questions, and even though I recognized they pretty much felt the same way I did, they were going through some of the same things I was, and after I got back from Vietnam I never told anybody about this except other Vietnam vets because I knew other people could not understand. But it was quite a bit of time after I came back from Vietnam that I finally realized, or I finally admitted to myself that what I had done was pretty gross.

Mythology of a Clean War

Such feelings of guilt are a heavy burden for the country to carry. They come out very slowly from the soldiers, whose experiences force them to strip away many layers of myth to be positively honest with themselves. Of course, there is a great deal of evidence that civilians in the United States are undergoing a similar illumination. The reaction to the testimony of Peter Martinsen is indicative of how the nation's views have changed in the last few years. When Martinsen, a former POW interrogator with the 541st Military Intelligence detachment in Vietnam, appeared at the Bertrand Russell tribunal in Stockholm three years ago, his testimony was laughed at in the United States, where the entire proceedings were reported as the clownishly insane brainchild of a doddering old man. The witnesses, such as Martinsen, were generally depicted as hard-left ideologues or some variety of youth freak. This image of the Russell hearings as absurd, fanciful ramblings from disconnected minds still persists, and the very fact that we could so easily dismiss all the evidence gathered by people like Bertrand Russell and Jean

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Paul Sartre is extremely disturbing. It shows how thoroughly a prevailing mythology can color our views.

Martinsen told of the same experiences at the Dellums hearings: electrical torture, bamboo splints under the fingernails, water torture, beatings, and so on. But the reaction was quite different. As Martinsen testified with the lifeless and resigned air of a man who had related horror stories many times to skeptical listeners, Rep. Bella Abzug, angered by what she was hearing, wanted to know why he'd done it:

> Rep. Abzug: You testified a little while ago that you participated in some mishandling of witnesses. You mean you just instinctively did that?
>
> Mr. Martinsen: It's hard to describe why I did it. I've lived with myself for the past four years wondering... but then again everybody else did. I wonder why they did it, also.... It is a thing that occurs so commonly.
>
> Rep. Abzug: Did you ever complain?
>
> Mr. Martinsen: Yes....
>
> Rep. Abzug: Did you have any emotional reaction of any kind after you'd indulged in some of these procedures you've described?
>
> Mr. Martinsen: Yes, I went out and got drunk. This was before marijuana became popular in Vietnam.

Rep. Abzug took Martinsen's testimony very seriously, although she was clinging to yet another myth about Vietnam—that particular individuals must be responsible for the inhuman treatment of Vietnamese civilians. She was learning that the murder of allies and neutrals followed naturally from our involvement in the Vietnam war.

This doesn't mean that the veterans felt no guilt, as trigger-men for a policy they did not design. Far from it. Guilt showed on the faces in the room. To some extent it is felt by the armed forces as a whole—mixed with resentment toward those responsible for the war policies. Colonel Robert D. Heinl, Jr., recently wrote in a military journal that our army is now "numbly extricating itself from a nightmare war the armed forces feel they had foisted on them by bright civilians who are now back on campus writing about the folly of it all." The vividness of the soldier's experience makes it much more difficult for him to write off the consequences of Vietnam, or a portion of the responsibility, than for the policymaker—who is distant enough from the mortars and white phosphorous to consider guilt as an interesting problem and no more. Phrases like "pacification" and "surgical air strikes" provide a kind of analyst's insulation from their real meaning.

Criminal responsibility for the guilt is a thorny issue because so many people are tainted by the institutional mythologies and the policies which actually make the killing possible. If one assumes that the guilty need not be tried by the totally innocent, but merely by the less guilty, a case might be made for criminal trials—but the procession of GIs who killed peasants would be a long one, numbering thousands of men. The courts martial would be conducted by the very officers who designed search-and-destroy tactics, free-fire zones, and the body-count measure of success. In supreme irony, the courts' decisions would be reviewed by the President, chief policymaker and representative of the people, who is himself ordering a shift in policy to place greater emphasis on air power. The web of responsibility is so very wide, and judgment so full of presumption, that criminal trials seem absurd. In a way, the impossibility of punishment puts a final touch on the immorality of the death in this war, for as a nation we might wish to be punished—to reach the cleansing finality of having paid. There will be no purgation for what we have done. We can only learn.

Perhaps one day we should build a monument of a Vietnamese peasant in front of the Capitol—for what he has helped teach us about ourselves. For the same reason, we should build next to it a monument of a short, balding infantryman in jungle fatigues, carrying an M-16 rifle, with the face of Everyman rising above his lieutenant's bars. ■

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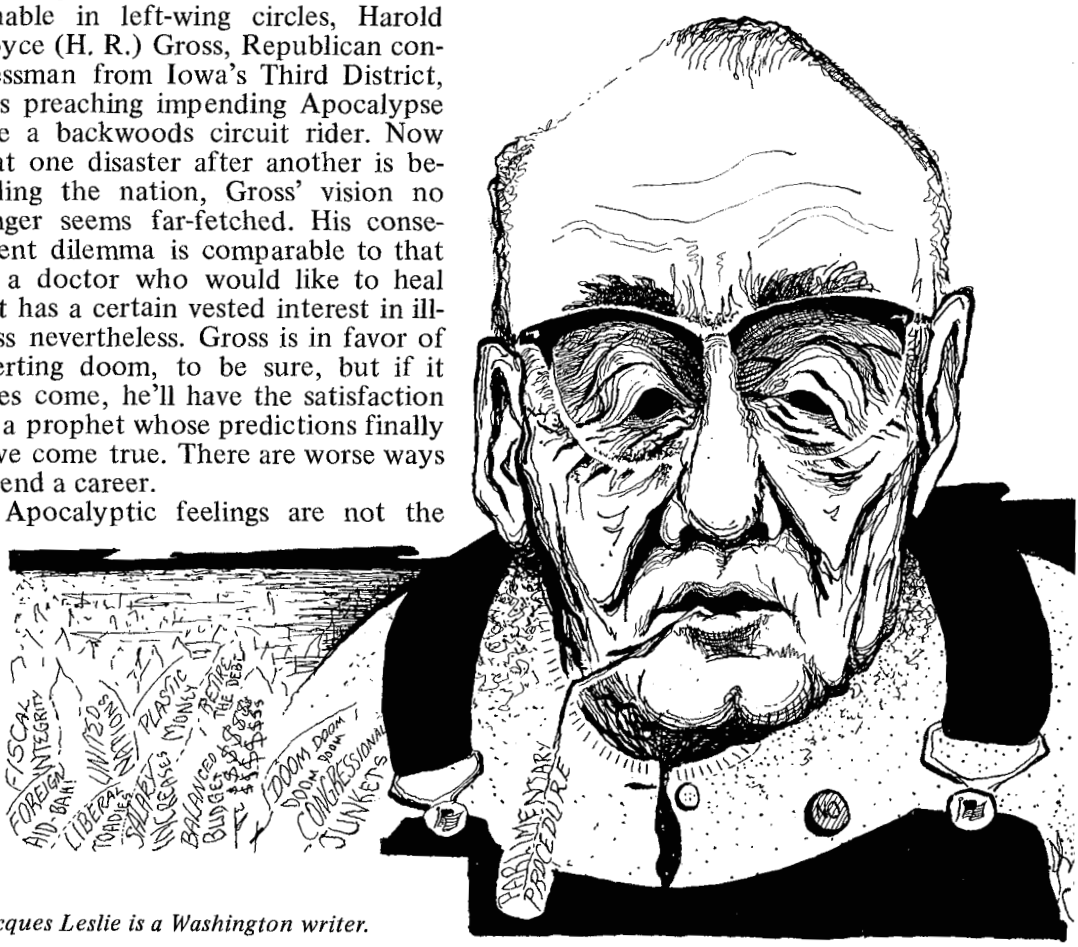
H. R. Gross: The Conscience of Uncle Sucker

by Jacques Leslie

Long before the word was fashionable in left-wing circles, Harold Royce (H. R.) Gross, Republican congressman from Iowa's Third District, was preaching impending Apocalypse like a backwoods circuit rider. Now that one disaster after another is befalling the nation, Gross' vision no longer seems far-fetched. His consequent dilemma is comparable to that of a doctor who would like to heal but has a certain vested interest in illness nevertheless. Gross is in favor of averting doom, to be sure, but if it does come, he'll have the satisfaction of a prophet whose predictions finally have come true. There are worse ways to end a career.

Apocalyptic feelings are not the



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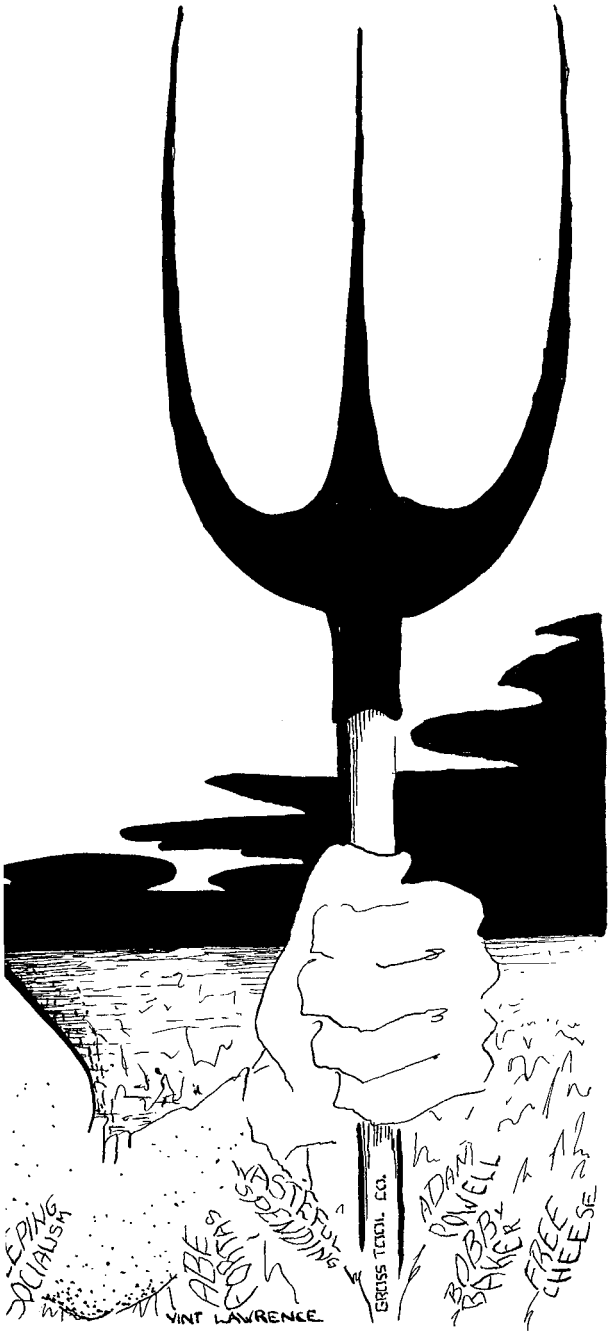

only thing Gross has in common with his left-wing counterparts. Like them, he has frequently inveighed against wasteful federal spending and the frightening power of the federal bureaucracy. He refers to the Pentagon as "Fort Fumble" and has words of praise for A. Ernest Fitzgerald, who exposed the $2-billion cost overrun on the C-5A. But Gross is anything but a liberal. He has built his reputation on a combination of uncompromising integrity, sophisticated understanding of House parliamentary procedure, a rough-hewn, ridiculing sense of humor, and an unquestioning belief in the wisdom of a balanced budget.

Called by some "the watchdog of the federal treasury" and by others "the abominable no-man of the House," Gross cultivates the idea that he is a principled loner, an exception among men who have taken to heart Sam Rayburn's maxim, "To get along, go along." In the 91st Congress, for example, Gross voted against President Nixon more often than all congressmen serving a full two-year term, opposing him on 58 per cent of all roll-call votes. (The average House member opposed the President 29 per cent of the time.) To Gross, ineffectiveness is practically evidence of vir-

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tue. "I don't care in committee or on the floor of the House whether I'm the sole vote. If I'm firmly convinced that a bill is bad, or enough of it is bad to overbalance whatever good may be in it, why I'll vote against it," Gross says. "You lose these fights. While you enjoy winning, it doesn't bother me to be in the minority as I have been a great many times."

Among the programs Gross has unsuccessfully opposed are foreign aid, the Peace Corps, all salary increases for congressmen from the time they received $12,500 a year (they now get $42,500), most congressional junkets, and the United Nations. When Gross loses, he occasionally resorts to sarcasm. A few days after President John F. Kennedy's death, when House members were considering a bill to pay for burial expenses, Gross rose on the floor to ask if the cost of the eternal flame at Arlington was included in the bill. When a bill to reimburse New York City for its expenses during Khrushchev's 1960 visit to the UN passed, Gross said on the floor, "I swear I think that what we ought to do is pass a bill, if that is necessary, to remove the torch from the hand of the Statue of Liberty and insert in lieu thereof a cup—a tin cup."

Gothic Radical

The front room of Gross' office gives fair warning of what lies within. One sign on the wall says "Nothing is easier than the expenditure of public money. It does not appear to belong to anybody. The temptation is overwhelming to bestow it on somebody." Another says, "There is always free cheese in a mousetrap." And another, "Error of opinion may be tolerated where reason is left free to combat it.—Thomas Jefferson." The last quotation is particularly apt, for, like Jefferson, Gross is a Francophile and an Anglophobe, and believes farmers are extraordinarily virtuous. He appears to have burrowed deeply into anti-establishment individualism—down through George Wallace and the racist flag-wavers, past Jerry Rubin and the underground left, around by tunnels occupied by Thoreau, Calhoun, and small farmers, and back through Andy Jackson to Jefferson. An example of his attitude towards France appears in his newsletter in a eulogy of Charles De Gaulle. Gross writes, "He was a nationalist and he put what he conceived to be the best interest of France above all other considerations. Would that we could find a President of the United States who would do as much!" Gross finishes his article by saying, "His coffin, made of rough oak timber, cost $63."

Looking like an American Gothic in glasses, Gross is a slight man with a booming voice. Born on a farm in Arispe, Iowa, in 1899, he never finished high school. After serving in the Army first under General John J. Pershing at the Mexican border and then in France in World War I, he studied at the University of Missouri School of Journalism but did not receive a degree. For the next 15 years he worked as a reporter and editor for various Iowa newspapers, then put his voice to use as a newscaster for radio station WHO in Des Moines. Known as "the fastest tongue in radio," Gross could speak 200 words a minute in a clear, solid tone. The man who introduced the future congressman and did his commercials was Ronald Reagan.

Gross first ran unsuccessfully in the Republican primary for governor in 1940, then in 1948 was elected to Congress from Iowa's Third District, which has not been represented by a Democrat since 1934. Gross' only close call came in 1964, when the Johnson landslide swept out all other Iowa Republican congressmen. Gross won that election by 419 votes. In 1968 he considered running for the Senate against Harold Hughes, but says he decided against it because of his advancing age (he is now 72).

Some observers think of Gross as an unmitigated clown, a "Caliban" who "has exploited and profited from every rigid prejudice in the state of Iowa" and "has an invincible incapac-

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ity for growth." A look at the newsletter he sends out weekly to 9,000 Iowa subscribers does not entirely dispel that notion. In it, the United States is referred to as "Uncle Sap," "Uncle Sucker," "Uncle Sugar," and "Uncle Handout"; *The Washington Post* is a "far-out left-wing newspaper"; credit cards are known as "plastic money"; and Martin Luther King "can foment trouble with the same facility that he advocates 'peace.' " He relates jokes about the Office of Economic Opportunity and hippies and, after mentioning a news account about President Johnson tossing beer cans out of his car as he sped around his Texas ranch, suggests that "Home on the Range" be changed to "Foam on the Range."

On occasion, Gross uses ridicule to make his colleagues squirm because they spend money so freely. When, for instance, Rep. Frank Thompson's bill to establish the National Foundation on the Arts and Humanities was brought to the floor for passage, Gross introduced an amendment to make sure that the Foundation would provide for belly dancing. He specified that he meant: "the irregular jactitations and/or rhythmic contraction and coordinated relaxations of the serrati, obliques, and abdominis recti group of muscles—accompanied by rotatory undulations, tilts, and turns timed with and attuned to the titillating and blended tones of synchronous woodwinds." Gross later admitted to the chamber that he had received technical assistance in drafting his amendment from Rep. Durward G. Hall, the only proctologist in Congress.

Not all of Congressman Gross' legislative humor demonstrates a light touch, however. When the House was considering a bill to control and exterminate rats, Gross asked on the floor, "It would be interesting to know how many children are bitten by squirrels that they feed and try to handle. On the basis of that, does anyone suggest a program to exterminate squirrels?" Partially as a result of Gross' opposition, the bill was scuttled.

Gross is in turn the frequent object of barbs from other congressmen. Observing that Gross has not left the United States since he fought in France in World War I and is opposed to congressional junkets, Reps. John Ashbrook and Frank Thompson sponsored a resolution last year to create a committee consisting only of Gross with the task of inspecting U.S. economic and military aid expenditures throughout the world. The committee was to be called the "H. R. Gross Special Congressional Investigating Committee."

Junketing congressmen often send Gross postcards from the countries they visit. "Paris is great! Wish you were here!" a typical card says. Rep. Morris Udall says he sent Gross a letter asking him to join a junket, and added, "Rome is ready for you." Udall says Gross wrote back saying, "The damn trouble is that I'm not ready for Rome."

Even President Johnson has joined in the needling. After giving his last State of the Union speech before a joint session of Congress on January 15, 1969, Johnson told reporters that he had seen tears in Lady Bird's eyes during the speech, and afterwards asked her why. Mrs. Johnson, who was sitting in the House gallery with her 19-month-old grandchild, Patrick Lyndon Nugent, said the child had been waving his bottle around, causing her to fear that "it would slip and hit H.R. Gross right on top of the head." President Johnson added, "I guess she felt that every Congress should have one H. R. Gross. I guess she wanted to preserve him."

The Techniques of Obstruction

Yet for all the kidding Gross receives, he is praised by a large number of congressmen on both sides of the aisle. Of 17 congressmen asked their opinion of him, only one failed to indicate respect for his efforts. For example, Rep. Silvio Conte, whose political persuasions are far to the left of Gross', says, "I think he performs a

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hell of a great service for the Congress." The conventional wisdom among representatives is that it is important to have one person like Gross in each Congress, but that if the House were filled with Grosses, it would be unworkable. He introduces relatively few bills each session and does not play a particularly active role in the shaping of legislation in committee. Instead, his function is essentially negative. Whereas most members pay detailed attention to bills within their committees, Gross is the only congressman who makes a concerted effort to read the entire contents of every bill, regardless of committee or calendar, that reaches the House floor. This is no mean feat, since in the 91st Congress, for example, 2,951 bills, many of them several hundred pages long, were reported to the floor.

Gross is constantly on the lookout for wasteful appropriations, self-serving arrangements among members, or ambiguous legislation. When he is unclear about some bill, he asks a question, and the response about the legislation's intent is then a matter of record. If the answer does not satisfy him, he may turn to his array of procedural gimmicks to delay or prevent the bill's passage, to ensure that other members know what they are voting on, or to get a record vote. He is generally well prepared, he is a good debater and expert parliamentarian, and his questions are germane. Because congressmen generally have a well-developed fear of embarrassment on the House floor, the knowledge that Gross is perenially there ready to challenge them has stimulated many to be well prepared themselves.

The most famous of Gross' techniques is the quorum call. He believes that all congressmen's first responsibility is to be on the floor when the House is in session, and therefore has no qualms about calling a quorum at any time. Though no statistics have ever been compiled on the subject, it is possible that the congressman from Iowa has called more quorum calls than any congressman since the founding of the Republic. During one six-month period, from January to June 1962, Gross called more than half of the 60 quorum calls put on in the House. Now, because a few other congressmen, notably Reps. Hall, Ashbrook, and William Scherle, have taken up his cause, Gross asks for relatively few quorum calls. Several years ago, Hall called a quorum simply to honor Gross' birthday. On another occasion, Rep. Tom Rees, angered by two quorum calls (one by Gross) which had been called during a meeting of the liberal Democratic Study Group the day before, made a speech on the House floor against "capricious and senseless use of quorum calls which have little or no relationship to the important matters which this Congress has at hand." As soon as Rees finished his speech, Gross made a point of order that a quorum was not present.

Because it takes half an hour to read through the list of House members, the quorum call can be used to delay action on a bill. Gross defends his use of it, saying, "How else can you make a point? Suppose you get up and you're pushed around by the Speaker or whoever is presiding. This is one way of letting them know that you don't like it. . . . The point is that I think they [other congressmen] ought to be on the House floor. I don't know whether they're in their offices or playing golf or in the gymnasium or in the swimming pool. . . . I'm using the quorum call just as they could use it, and if they're on the floor, I can't get a quorum call."

Other congressmen disagree. They believe they can spend much of their time more productively in their offices than on the floor and say that Gross can afford to spend so much time there only because he does not take an active part in the writing and shaping of legislation. "I'd like to know where I'd be if I spent as much time on the floor as he does," says Rep. Udall. "If you insisted that all 435 members be there all the time, it

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would be an incredible waste of time."

Another of Gross' techniques is the objection to unanimous consent requests. The House handles much of its business, particularly scheduling, private bills, and assorted matters of secondary interest, through unanimous consent. When it is used, the objection of one member is enough to defeat a motion. Congressman Gross employs this technique to combat the "Tuesday-Thursday Club," comprised of congressmen who arrange to have unimportant business scheduled on Friday and Monday so that they can go home four days at a stretch. Gross has frequently used unanimous consent objections to block long weekend recesses or the scheduling of unimportant bills on Friday, thereby transforming the Tuesday-Thursday Club into the Tuesday-Friday Club. Asked if Gross had ever put a monkey wrench in his plans, Carl Albert, now the Speaker of the House, said, "There have been so many times, I can't recall."

Another dilatory procedure is the motion to "strike the enacting clause." This can be used only when all time for discussion of an amendment has expired. By moving to "strike the enacting clause," a congressman gets five more minutes of debate time, followed by a vote whether or not to kill the bill. Because this motion must be made in writing, Gross always carries copies of it in his pocket.

To some extent Congressman Gross benefits from the mystification that surrounds House parliamentary procedure. House procedure is codified in four sources: the Constitution, the House rules, Thomas Jefferson's *Manual*, and the 11 volumes of precedents of the Speakers and Chairmen of the Committees of the Whole. Gross has made himself an expert on House procedure and advises new members that the first thing they should do is learn the rules. "I can see some congressmen who've been here for several terms who don't even know the working rules of the House . . . . Some of them are pitiful, some of them never engage in debate, never get into any issues. That's their business, but nobody can tell me that the country wouldn't be better served if more of them were staying on the floor of the House and knew what the hell was going on."

Rep. Udall, who ran unsuccessfully for House Majority Leader in January and has co-authored a book called *The Job of a Congressman*, believes Gross over-emphasizes the importance of the rules. "It's a myth that the rules are so tough and complicated. The gimmicks Gross uses you could teach a guy in a week or two."

Because of Gross' willingness to use all the parliamentary procedures at his disposal, he is something of an alien power to the leadership of both parties. One congressman cites House Minority Leader Gerald Ford as saying, "There are three parties in the House—Democrats, Republicans, and H. R. Gross." Many committee chairmen try to iron out possible differences with Gross by notifying him of their intentions in advance. Some congressmen report that they have changed legislation in committee to anticipate Gross' objections on the floor. Thus, though Gross rarely has the votes to back up his convictions, he does have a negative influence, a veto power, over some aspects of legislation.

The Gadfly as Freak

The basic article of Gross' faith is summed up in his bill, H.R. 144 (a gross equals 12 dozen), which he has introduced annually for more than a decade. The bill is invariably assigned to the Ways and Means Committee and never heard from again. It calls for, essentially, a balanced budget and the gradual retirement of the national debt. Deficit spending is not only responsible for the nation's present economic difficulties, Gross says, but also, "We're plastering the generations to come with mortgages that will

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never be paid off. We're putting them under an unbelievable handicap. And all this is having its effect on the moral fiber of the country. . . . The main reason why we will go into a crisis will be financial. At least that will be the springboard."

Gross is aware that his view of deficit spending is a distinctly minority one. "All you have to do," he says, "is get up and ask them [other congressmen] when they're going to give consideration to paying on the federal debt, and they look down their noses or smile at you as though you're some sort of a freak standing down in the well of the House. I can see it. My vision isn't getting any better with age but I can see them around on the floor. 'What the hell, you must be nuts!' "

Estimates of what Rep. Gross has "saved" American taxpayers range from millions to billions of dollars, but not everyone agrees that the amount saved always justifies the scuttling of the programs. Certainly some of Gross' proposed economies are reasonable. One example is a bill he has introduced this year to prohibit junkets by lame-duck congressmen. In the past such trips have been authorized as a kind of farewell present to non-returning congressmen.

But Gross is opposed not only to lame-duck junkets, but the great majority of other junkets as well. When asked if he thought any junkets might have an educational value worth their expense, Gross said, "Oh, some of them might, but all too many of them are in the nature of pleasure trips." While that statement is probably true, many congressmen believe Gross' efforts in preventing junkets are a bit overzealous and a perfect reflection of his own provincialism.

Nevertheless, some of Gross' objections to junkets seem unquestionably justified. In July, 1969, Gross blocked a unanimous consent request to skip a House session on the day of the Apollo 11 launching so that Congressmen could accept free government transportation to Cape Kennedy to observe the moonshot. Gross said he was "unable to find any reason at all why a substantial amount of money should be spent" to transport the congressmen and their families to Florida. Because of his objection, the House was forced to meet on the day of the launching anyway.

Among the projects Gross has opposed are the Rayburn House Office Building, Robert F. Kennedy Stadium, and the D. C. Aquarium. He voted against a bill to appropriate $76,000 to outgoing Speaker John McCormack for office space; he blocked House passage of a bill authorizing a $500,000 study of proposals for the United States to convert to the metric system; he blocked a $1,500 expense allowance for the congressional physician. Some charge that Gross is concerned only with trivial appropriations, while ignoring the huge sums meted out annually to agencies like the Department of Defense. Last year Gross voted against the appropriation bills for the Departments of Commerce, Housing and Urban Development, Interior, Justice, Labor, Post Office, State, Transportation, Treasury, and Health, Education, and Welfare; he voted against appropriations for the Office of Education, foreign aid, independent offices, the Madison Building of the Library of Congress, the National Foundation on the Arts and Humanities, and the Smithsonian Institution. But he did vote in favor of the largest appropriation bill of all, $66.6 billion for the Department of Defense, because "in this business I would prefer to make an error on the side of what I conceive to be national security, the ability to retaliate, the ability to live in a nuclear holocaust." Gross says he believes some of the $66.6 billion is spent wastefully, but because so much necessary information is classified, "unless you're a member of the House Armed Services Committee, how in the hell can you know whether it's justified or not?"

Gross hopes the numerous examples of wasteful spending he has found will have a symbolic effect on the

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public. "It's a hell of a lot clearer picture when you're dealing with $850,000 than with $70 billion when you can't get a handle on it." But once armed with the knowledge that the government is wasteful, what is the public supposed to do? Gross doesn't know. "All we can do is try to hold members of Congress to account for the results obtained from the expenditure of [for example] $70 billion [on defense]. Eventually it shows up in one way or another. It may be a hell of a long time, and those who are the most responsible may be beyond the reach of the public, but there's no easy answer to this."

Gurgling in the Wasteland

If Gross is not a sophisticated political theorist, then he is a dedicated moralist who has joined in attacks on Abe Fortas, Adam Clayton Powell, and Bobby Baker. As a result of his accusation that Max Kampelman, a Johnson appointee to the post of chairman of the District of Columbia City Council, was involved in a $4-billion international deal that "reeks of incompetence or fraud or both," Kampelman withdrew his name and Johnson was forced to appoint someone else.

The Congressman gets much of his information on wasteful spending and unethical activities through tips from reporters. Clark Mollenhoff, the Washington bureau chief of the Des Moines *Register*, who calls Gross a "genuine liberal," says he frequently gives bits of information to Gross resulting in seven to ten stories a year. "We've got something going all the time," Mollenhoff says. He gives a perhaps inflated estimate that from 20 to 40 other reporters also give tips to Gross, who makes the accusations public when he feels sure of their accuracy. Gross' two chief assistants, Bob Case and Julian Morrison, are both former reporters themselves, but the Congressman denies that this is anything more than a coincidence.

By Washington standards Gross leads a spartan existence, so much so that some believe he finds the concept of pleasure offensive. While he labors on Capitol Hill during the day, his wife is at home reading and underlining for him. By the time he returns home, she has put the material she thinks he should read on a table next to his easy chair. At the end of the evening, if there is time, the couple plays a game of cribbage, then goes to bed. Gross has boasted of the fact that he does not own a tuxedo, nor his wife an evening gown. Several years ago he expressed shock that the Reverend Bill D. Moyers, special assistant to President Johnson, danced the watusi and frug at a party at the Smithsonian Institution. Gross himself infrequently indulges in fresh-water fishing, his only hobby. Known privately as a gentle, gracious man, his friends include former Senator Eugene McCarthy, who once reflected on Gross: "He has always proceeded with good spirit."

Gross gives the impression of a gruff, hard-bitten, no-nonsense curmudgeon, but this is to some extent a pose, a self-protective device. During an interview in his office, he is interrupted by five loud rings announcing a House session at noon. He stops for a moment and says, "That could ring once, and you could hear it, and you'd be put on notice that there was to be a session of Congress at noon, but it rings five times. There's an old story in the Navy: 'If it moves, salute it; if it stands still, paint it; and if you write about it, make 10 copies.' " Then, without a trace of a smile, he returns to his original subject. Rep. Frank Thompson says that after he acknowledged Gross' birthday on the floor of the House last year, Gross met with him at the rear of the House chamber. Gross first upbraided Thompson for mentioning his birthday, then smiled for a moment and said, "Thanks."

Several congressmen believe Gross has mellowed over the years. Following the death of Rep. Robert J. Corbett in April, Gross became the rank-

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ing minority member of the Post Office and Civil Service Committee. Rep. Edward J. Derwinski, who ranks immediately behind Gross in both the Foreign Affairs Committee and Post Office and Civil Service Committee, says, "H. R. has already done more in a month than Corbett did in years. He consults with us. He's had meetings. He's considerate of all the members. He's an extremely attentive ranking member to his people. I think he recognizes he has a responsibility to the other members of the party. He's no longer H. R. Gross the gadfly, he's H. R. Gross the ranking member." Derwinski says that when a junket proposal in the Post Office and Civil Service Committee came up, "He could have made it more uncomfortable if he wanted to. But he just went through the motions of opposing as we passed the travel resolution. He no longer has the same vehemence as he did before." Morris Udall, who is also on the Post Office and Civil Service Committee, says, "Responsibility is sobering. Gross is not being as unreasonable as was feared." Gross denies that he has mellowed.

Slouching Toward Iowa

With his constant attendance on the House floor, his careful consideration of every bill, his desire to truly debate legislation on the floor, and his relatively minor role in committee work, Gross probably comes closer to embodying the grade school textbook's conception of a congressman than any other member. A literalist, Gross believes he is doing what the framers of the Constitution had in mind.

In his newsletter Gross once cited approvingly a statement by Barry Goldwater: "The challenge is not to find new or different truths, but to learn to apply established truths to the problems of the contemporary world." Gross embodies the old values that he thinks are disappearing from America: simplicity, frugality, integrity, diligence, and God-fearing religiosity. We have gone wrong, he thinks, in allowing an all-encompassing federal bureaucracy to control our lives and diminish our freedoms.

Rep. Otto Passman, one of Gross' admirers, accurately describes the thrust of Gross' efforts in Congress: "I came out of the free enterprise system, but it seems that now we are on the road to socialism. The government will control people's lives from cradle to grave, and the people won't fight it because they haven't experienced democracy. With socialism, putting people on the dole, you paralyze initiative and deaden incentive. There's never been a democracy that's lasted more than 200 years, and this country is 181 years old now. Gross has slowed down the trend to socialism from a walk to a crawl, but he hasn't stopped it."

To Gross, that rough beast slouching towards us is socialism. He prides himself on having identified the animal for us, and if he could, he would slay it. But he is no fool, and he knows that parliamentary gimmicks are no match for this beast. Consequently, even accolades like the following, from Rep. William J. Scherle, one of Congress' more determinedly reactionary members, do not cheer him: "It's interesting to find out how many times this renowned scholar has predicted what was going to happen, how year after year his statements have come true, but not only that, how many people have to eat crow . . . . I think that anybody who ever gets the books and papers of H. R. Gross probably will own one of the most gratifying gifts anybody could ever receive."

In a few years Gross will retire to his home in Waterloo. It is easy to imagine him there, trying to live the leisurely life that a man with a career of hard work behind him is entitled to. He'll go to church on Sundays and play cribbage at night. He'll read the papers, and see the evidences of Uncle Sucker's latest follies, and hope for a few more years before the beast reaches Iowa. ■

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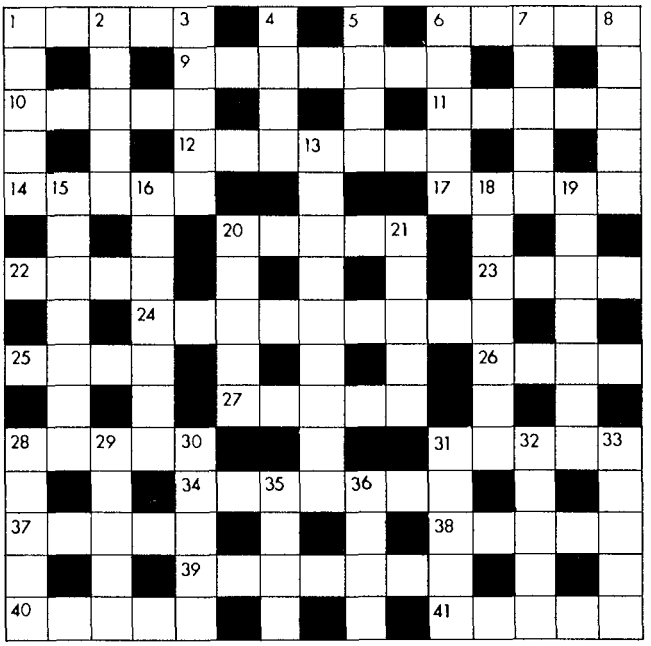
The Political Puzzle

by John Barclay



ACROSS

1. Followed by 6 Across, a 1972 focal point. (5)
6. See 1 Across. (5)
9. G. I. coach preceded 1 & 6 Across. (7)
10. Boredom in Rouen nuits. (5)
11. A nonstop without short answer comes out ahead. (2, 3)
12. Where to be near the champs. (7)
14. Needleworker creates pollution? (5)
17. Be slow in straightening up tea yard. (5)
20. Take a position in East and West. (5)
22. Second person comes out grand in slang. (4)
23. Proved impossible to stop items emerging. (4)
24. In 1 Across, he may try to elate aged. (1, 8)
25. Rule used to bind 24 Across in 6 Across. (4)
26. Broadcaster from Carnegie Tech. (4)
27. Proved impossible to stop items emerging. (5)
28. He reads to sweet little things. (5)
31. Place to put poor ideas. (5)
34. Trip end for the Vietnam papers. (7)
37. Good place for lofty panel discussions. (5)
38. Columnist doubles as pol. (5)
39. For a miner, it helps time pass. (7)
40. As yet no action, but should come later. (5)
41. This industry could not settle strike. (5)

DOWN

1. They follow track and help. (5)
2. Wild golfer upsets back end of Volkswagen. (5)
3. It's even trickier when you eliminate the short track. (5)
4. 9 Across, for example. (4)
5. Elimination of railroad brings farmer to the fore. (4)
6. Sometimes it will help to sob. (5)
7. Best man to imitate dog or cat. (5)
8. After slap, these days returned, or so they sang. (5)
13. Names test true leaders. (9)
15. Develop a better cane hen. (7)
16. Keeps North and South from coming together. (7)
18. These views set SPCA apart. (7)
19. How nest did get bigger. (7)
20. East-West goody. (5)
21. Rusk and Acheson ride in a sedan chair. (5)
28. It would be great to add New York to Fun City list. (5)
29. Loses bet, but still comes out ahead. (5)
30. Bad for bowler, except after the game. (5)
31. Kind of apple for Henry or Maude. (5)
32. Can it be Susan? That is the question. (5)
33. In sex, pelicans really put out. (5)
35. No, it doesn't turn out that way. (4)
36. A timely expression. (4)

The numbers indicate the number of letters and words, e.g., (2, 3) means a two-letter word followed by a three-letter word. Groups of letters, e.g., USA, are treated as one word. Answers to last month's puzzle are on page 9.

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Striking Out on Your Own

by Paul Dickson

Self-employment is the daydream of the decade. The same look of those of the fifties, the wistful envy directed through the windows at the professionals in the offices, can now be seen on the faces of those inside, staring toward the seaside loft where the sails are rigged, or the writer's garret, or the beach-umbrella rental outlet, toward a place where a person can become not a better part of a whole but rather a whole unto himself or herself. To everyone, from the lay-off prone, sick-of-it-all missile designer to the memo- and regulation-crazed bureaucrat, the aspiration to break away is gaining in popularity.

But the boom in self-employment aspirations parallels and equals the boom in office construction. Perhaps it is always this way—the dreams of going back to the farm, self-sufficiency, the Bresodi system, gushed from the American subconscious at precisely the moment that the family farm was being annihilated by machine agriculture. The Bresodi system of family farming captivated imaginations of the 1930s, and a few people actually followed through on the dream, but more generally, the fantasies mesmerized the others, permitting them an easier way of denying that the day of the small American farmer was over.

For many, the thought of self-employment is a counter-current that permits the heavier flow of traffic in the other direction, towards institutionalized work. Ironically, it is often an exaggerated belief in onesmanship that is the greatest obstacle to the possibility of breaking away, as more and more people envelop their aspirations in an impossible dream trap. All it takes to bait this trap is to set up an unattainable goal that in your heart you know cannot be realized except through reincarnation in the next life.

This trap comes in many shapes and sizes. One of the most common and most longingly discussed variations is the Big Moment Trap, in which the subject waits for Opportunity to come crashing through his or her door. Like the eager starlets of yore, these victims are mentally perched on the drugstore stool at Hollywood and Vine awaiting discovery. Another variation is The Great American Novel Trap, which is largely self-explanatory and tailor-made for those who need a goal so big it precludes starting. Finally, there is The Weekly Newspaper in Vermont Trap, best described as an aspiration for those who need a convenient nice-sounding rustic dream that flies in the face of reality. It is usually held by those who don't know that the back pages of *Editor and Publisher*

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show that country weeklies in Vermont (Oregon, Maine, and other parts of Pepperidge Farm country) are folding, not being created. These schemers never make demographic sense and consider it heresy to talk about ventures in booming areas such as northern Virginia, Long Island, and suburban Atlanta, because these areas might really be able to support a folksy, muckraking weekly newspaper.

There are, of course, Vermont weeklies that prosper and people that get discovered, but these are long-shots and, crudely put, long-shots seldom pay the rent—a goal that is not simply attained even by those with possible dreams.

For beyond the impossible dream trap, there are other, more formidable obstacles to independent work that are also growing along with the urge to be self-employed. These may not be discovered until after the decision to break out, because most people employed by organizations do not notice their dependence on the cradle-to-grave security provided by the company, the unthought-of compensations of professional life. But for people who have broken out, the security gap is frightening and widening. At one time, the differences in benefits between the self-employed and the corporate types were in the areas of niceties and the lack of certain petty irritants that could be easily made up for by any person who had the will to go out on his own. Job advertisements emphasized "fringe" benefits—luxuries at the edges of human experience that could be dispensed with for the luxury of rewarding work. But as the advantages of institutional life have grown, so has the corresponding insecurity of the outside world—as more and more people expect the needs of existence to be filled through the office, it is more difficult to fill those needs outside. People who break with organizations have to cope with benefit shock.

Perhaps the best description of benefit shock is contained in a recent report from the Institute for the Future, a new Connecticut think-tank, that projects employment and employee benefits in America over the next 15 years and paints a portrait of working conditions in 1985. The three-volume study, resulting from over a year's effort by a score of experts from fields in which benefit patterns are a prime concern, foresees broadly expanded advantages and predicts that benefits will render self-employment a rarity. One description of conditions in 1985 goes like this:

> Employee benefits have merged with compensation, social welfare, and on-the-job amenities; it is difficult to tell where one ends and the others begin. They are integrated in the minds of employers, employees, and the government. In effect, the environ-

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ment created by the integration of social-welfare programs and benefit programs required by legislation and existing as a result of agreements between labor and management has guaranteed all employees reasonable wages, more education and leisure, safer and more pleasant working places, and the avoidance of most of the fiscal hazards associated with accidents, ill health, and old age. The programs mesh together: we have translated at least part of our capacity for economic production into *security*. The "rugged" individual who wants to take his wages in cash instead of guarantees against adversity has almost passed from the scene.

The Institute's report is just one of many voices that will rise to tell you that as corporate and government employee benefits increase and on-the-job sweeteners get sweeter, self employment appears anachronistic and self-defeating. And, if you are self-employed, you can be assured that it will be almost impossible to keep up with those benefits generally available to the employed Joneses.

Some of the specific upcoming benefits that your co-workers will lay on you as reasons for not leaving may include an odds-on shot at a four-day work week, improved health benefits, and periodic raises, but these are peanuts compared to the cornucopia of benefits predicted by the Institute. Assuming that the Institute is roughly correct, in your bout with benefit shock you must not only consider the weight of benefits now provided but add to them those which will be commonplace by 1985:

- Employers will pay about 50 per cent of payroll in benefits.
- Benefits will generally reflect cost-of-living, as escalators will be built into most pension plans to guarantee the pensioner a standard of living rather than a dollar amount.
- The 35-hour week and flexible working hours will be common, and more holidays and longer vacations the norm.
- Corporation-owned leisure facilities will be available to most employees along with many more leisure-oriented benefits.
- It will be common to find on-site education programs and facilities, and some firms will provide educational leaves and even paid sabbaticals for employees.
- Subsidized housing and company cars will be available to many employees, along with savings plans to which the employer matches the employee's deposits.
- Expansive employee-counseling programs on matters as diverse as taxes, investments, and retirement planning will be everywhere.
- Psychiatric and dental care provisions will be part of the standard package of employee medical benefits.
- Since individual automobile insurance costs will have zoomed out of sight, group car insurance offered through the company will become the norm.
- Inter-conglomerate pension plans will have been established nationally.

Not all of the impetus to join a large employer comes from the irresistible goodies offered and from their wearing, magnetic appeal for the struggling entrepreneur. Less gentle forces will try to club him into the fold, too. His taxes will rise (partly to pay the government portion of other people's benefits and subsidies), the competition will be rough, and he will lack the power to protect himself against a world that is increasingly organized for the benefit of those in large groups. The small farmer was pulled from the fields by the bright lights and big dreams of the city, but he was also kicked there by inexorable market forces. Similarly, the self-employed adventurer and the breakaway of high principle must contend with the push-pull, carrot-and-stick attraction exercised by the large employers who advertise the benefit packages.

The Cocoon of the Future

Benefit shock, at best, is a difficult condition to contend with. Such visions of the future have their effect on the currently self-employed, who project the disadvantages and conclude

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that they will be relatively much worse off later than now. Such despair can be countered, depending on the strength of one's love for benefit freedom, the feelings not far removed from those held by the unsomatized Mr. Savage at the end of *Brave New World*. Benefit freedoms include not having to do what one is doing now until 1985, not having to make the ethical and lifestyle compromises required by organizations, being unbossed and unbossing, and relying on ingenuity to make up for security (for instance, forming an independent group to buy car insurance as it becomes impossible to purchase it alone). The value of such freedoms may continue to inflate as the price each individual must pay for his benefits in terms of decreasing autonomy becomes greater.

The prophecies of the Institute for the Future are already beginning to be fulfilled. The men from Hartford, for instance, are not all that excited any more about what they term "non-group individuals." They may be eager to sell you life insurance, but they are less eager to sell medical coverage to the self-employed. In most cases, the independent must employ some razzle-dazzle consumer salesmanship to get such coverage, only one area in which the burden of Willie Loman falls not on the seller but on the buyer. Group health and hospitalization, the only kind people can afford these days, is increasingly bought in large blocks by employers, and when one seeks single-person or single-family coverage, he can expect physicals for all and anticipate "exemptions" that relieve the insurance company of any responsibility for past ailments or illnesses. One can also forget about disability insurance or any policy that pays for working days lost because such things are almost never sold to the unsalaried. In short, in the eyes of the insurance computers and tables, the self-employed becomes a random digit and, as such, an actuarial schmuck.

Other subversive changes on the horizon will increasingly thwart the urge to self-employment. One of the papers to emerge from the American Academy of Arts and Sciences' Commission on the Year 2000 addresses the future of the bureaucracy and predicts that institutions themselves will change, making them less oppressive and more livable. Basically, the authors of the paper hold that the bureaucratic form of organization is doomed and destined to be slowly replaced by an "organic-adaptive" structure in which organizations will be constantly changing in response to specific problems rather than maintain their present mechanical inflexibility. To dip into one more recent futurist document, a large survey conducted by General Electric entitled *The Future Business Environment* predicts that business organizations will increasingly be more directed by the aspirations of their memberships than by the dictates of administrative convenience as is presently true. In short, if the forecasters are right, the promise of new benefits is just part of the subverting influence on those who aspire to become self-employed.

High-Priced Independence

In general, it seems that most of the "futurist's" predictions (even taken with much skeptical salt) and emerging truisms of employment and consumption fly in the face of the lifestyle/workstyle of the self-employed. We are told, for instance, that a checkless, cashless society will be widespread in a matter of years. Even today the self-employed are relegated by the banks and merchants to the untouchable status awarded to those who carry cash. Since nobody trusts anybody with hard cash anymore, it is, as Marshall McLuhan puts it, a "poor man's credit card." To be sure, credit, loans, little plastic cards, and other amenities of this emerging "society" don't come easily to those who have no salary to proclaim and to have garnished, no government service rating to state, and no work telephone number where creditors can call for a

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quick fiscal checkup. Should one opt for this financial counter-culture, he is advised to sharpen up the traditional American ability to persuade others to "run up a tab" or "hang on for a few days." Generally, little stores, small companies, dentists, and others who are either self-employed or have some kinship to it, are pretty easy to deal with--but few get away with this dealing with big institutions that proclaim their love for the entrepreneurial spirit.

Similarly, as we move further into the state in which our material well-being more and more becomes a function of being able to meet timed payments and plan ahead financially, the only thing that the self-employed can bank on today is the inability to time his finances and plan financially. Once freed from wages or a salary, one is no longer paid on every second Tuesday or whenever. One's new enterprise will be supplying goods or services to others, and having "sold" something is often a far cry from getting paid for it. Writers, for example, find a veritable payment-policy jungle in their realm as some of their outlets give money in advance, others pay on acceptance, and still others when the article or book is on sale. It is therefore not unusual for the self-employed to be owed relatively vast sums for their labors without having any money in pocket. Meanwhile, as we all know, the clearly established trend is for large institutions to demand payments from the individual on exact schedules. To cite one of many, the person on his own payroll has nobody to withold his income taxes in small doses so it must be paid in jarring quarterly lumps which come straight from the pocket. Then there is the business of Social Security payments. Not only do the self-employed pay them out of pocket, but they pay more than their salaried peers, whose employers share in the Social Security tax burden. As one's own employee the whole amount is paid by the individual. As a result, to the person leaving a job Social Security deductions become what is appropriately called "Self-Employment Tax." If in 1970 a person made $7,800 as an employed worker he had $404.60 deducted for Social Security; but if he made the same amount on his own, his self-employment tax came to $538.20. Perhaps $133.60 is not much but Social Security is going up and it is by no means the only tax on self-employment.

Besides financial considerations like the self-employment tax, there are other societal mechanisms working to discourage the lone worker. For instance, the burgeoning proclivity to zone communities is actually making it illegal to work at home in many areas. More and more "nice" neighborhoods, fearing backyard rendering operations and cottage industries, have zoned out all home-based businesses (although doctors are often exempted).

On another level, there is overwhelming evidence to support the conclusion that we are entering a new age of instantaneous, computerized procedures in which such things as international computer links for detailed transactions will hum away freeing us generally from dreaded clerkships and nagging detail. In contrast to this marvelous world of cybernation stands the self-employed individual, who of economic necessity must languish in an unautomated state wallowing in his own details. Often the margin between success and failure for the self-employed is the ability to note every dime and detail of every transaction in crummy little notebooks. Clear, comprehensive records are required by what the taxmen call "unincorporated small businesses" and if one does not want to be taxed into insolvency he must prove that he, like multinational corporations, has incurred business expenses. Like big companies, certain tax breaks are offered to the self-employed, such as being able to deduct part of the rent as business expense. Such things are worth knowing about, but they require some heavy reading in tax guides.

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Generally, the self-employed are thought to be pursuing a specialization, such as writing or painting, but he must devote an increasing amount of time to playing the many roles of an institution. As jobs and roles in society become more specialized, the self-employed must buck the trend by becoming not only his own tax consultant but also his own promoter, salesman, accountant, bill collector, treasurer, secretary, janitor, coffee shop, building maintenance staff, and trash removal service.

Striking Out on One's Own

Despite all of these trends, which range from increasingly traumatic benefit shock to the need to fill a variety of detail-laden commercial roles, the picture is not all bleak because even ganged together they do not *as yet* add up to an insurmountable hurdle. The simple fact that many alive and thriving self-employed people are roaming around is testament to the still-present surmountability of the odds. To be sure, the aforementioned list of trends leads to the conclusion that unless things take a radically new direction the odds against realizing the aspiration to becoming self-employed will grow to long-shots.

As the logistics of breaking away from the job trap become more of a hurdle, the reasons for breaking away remain strong and will as long as bureaucracies and organizations retain their present character. Those major desires of seeking happiness, gaining freedom, and asserting one's integrity that define the dream are still very real. And beyond these major self-explanatory considerations there is another lure which is the indefinite but promising new quality of life offered those freeing themselves from captivity. One's days will change and take on an entirely new complexion. Some aspects of these days are good, some bad, but almost all of one's own doing. In this new realm new considerations present themselves in topical mixtures of incidents, questions, statements, and what can best be termed odds and ends. For many, these daily considerations are as important as the major abstract considerations of happiness, freedom, and integrity and with them make self-employment the only alternative. They become, as many who are self-employed will testify, habit forming.

For openers, there are a host of things that strike one's fancy in the new incarnation. Needless to say these are minor items but help define what may very well emerge as one's totally new sense of humor. First there are the one-liners such as: a *Fortune* article on the problems of excess leisure time, discovering the two meanings of the phrase "striking out on one's own," and the realization that one is too small a business to qualify for Small Business Loans and other Small Business Administration goodies. On another level there are the incidents of one's revitalized fancy. For example, there is the phone report from one's former place of employment in which the quavering voice of a former co-worker says that office politics have degenerated to their meanest level in history. "Not so," you are likely to tell him or her with cruel glee, "just as bad when I left." Then there is the blissful business of listening to morning and/or evening reports of traffic snafus on the radio, just as one imagines the President and other work-at-homes do.

Moving into another realm, one encounters new and sometimes contradictory concepts of time coming forth. Normally the self-employed person is plagued by more than one recurring question like, "When one is on one's own is every day Saturday or every day Monday or is every day a little of each?" Then there are a host of pleasurable encounters with time such as: having the exhilarating experience of decreeing Wednesday and Thursday the weekend (and then working on everyone else's weekend); learning anew, like a kid let out for the summer, to see time as one's own and feel the heady burden of contend-

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ing with its promises and limitations; realizing that nine and five are just two lackluster digits on the old wall clock; remembering that you can take time off without having "earned" it and without having asked for it; or, after four days of 10-minute lunches, taking a three-hour lunch and finding that there is really nobody to ask where you've been. The newly freed can be prepared for the first time in years to find out what eight hours means in terms of what really can or cannot be done when liberated from meetings, bossing and being bossed, office politics, baseball pools, telephone marathons, collections for the about-to-be-wed lady in accounting and all of the other things that people who use terms like "counter-productive" in their memos must face every day.

An Identity Vacuum

On the other hand, there are unpleasant discoveries such as the first encounter with the pressures of an unproductive day or days. A person on his own is free to look at time as an unstructured, free-form commodity, but he must also ponder the fact that wasted time is charged against him alone. Back at the office, distractions like coffee breaks, bull sessions, and long rambling phone calls were tolerable and even welcome; but the lone worker is hit with the stark realization that such leisure means there will be less finished product at the end of the day. When the breakaway realizes that he must sell his individual product and that he has no organization to blur who really does what, he becomes extremely jealous of time. He may recall wistfully that as a Civil Service GS-11 or whatever, unproductive time meant much less because somebody paid your way through.

No less dramatic than the new view of time are those questions of identity which present themselves to the self-employed. These identity crises and situations normally come packaged in little episodes which occur when others find that they have encountered a bona fide weirdo without a boss. Typical of these episodes are such situations as these:

- You are stopped by a traffic policeman to be given a ticket and he asks the name of your employer and you say that you work for yourself. Next he asks, "Come on, where do you work? Are you employed or not?" You say, "Self-employed" with the pride of a robber baron but you know that he thinks you are an able-bodied welfare loafer. He, among others you meet, knows that self-employment is a tired euphemism for being out of work.
- Your neighbors become curious and somehow nervous about the fact that you are around the house a lot and not tying up traffic.
- Your alumni group or something of that ilk sends you a computer-readable form to fill out in which you are asked to check the box that describes your occupation. You find that there is no box for you so you scribble something in the margin describing what you do. The machine sends you another form and a note saying that the first form was incomplete. You pencil in another box and write "other" next to it and then check it off. The alumni computer accepts that as will other data and dossier-gathering devices which as a class consider you as undigestable as anything other than "other."
- You become extremely nervous about meeting new people because of the everpresent question, "Who are you with?" When your answer fails to attach you to a recognized organization like *The New York Times*, or Nader's Raiders, or the Department of Labor, both parties to the conversation often become embarrassed by your obscurity. There is some second-echelon hope for you as, say, a writer, in the recovery question, "Well, who do you write for?" If you have published for an organ of widely acknowledged distinction, such as *Harper's*, things will bounce back quickly and the conversation can proceed. But if

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you write here and there, or are still working on your first novel, you will have to learn to live with the "I see" response—and to support your own ego while the doomed conversation struggles through the formalities of termination.

Pleasures of the Self-Made Trap

Still another typical identity problem occurs when, despite other political proclivities, one finds that he or she is thinking in the most starkly capitalistic terms on certain issues. By becoming an unincorporated, unsubsidized small business one's attitudes commonly bend to the point that it is not rare to find oneself watching some jowly, fatcat industry spokesman on the tube pleading for some new subsidy, depletion allowance, or other taxpayer-supplied amenity, and one starts mumbling things like, "socialist creep." In another version of the same attitude, one dreams of addressing the chairmen of the boards of Esso, Lockheed, and GE, to brief them on the thrills and realities of operating in a rigorous free-market economy.

Not to be overlooked in this discussion are the many revelations made to the self-employed which define cost as a function of a new workstyle. In short, one's consuming habits are going to change radically. Up, one quickly realizes, is the cost of paper clips and other consumables that used to be borrowed from the office. So too are utility bills if one works at home. On the other hand many things come down. In most cases, transportation costs, clothing costs, and lunch allotments are sharply reduced. Often the most dramatic decrease is in what the employed person writes off as "walking around" money or that spent for the bag of M&M's for extra mid-morning energy, the beers after work, overpriced bitter coffee in plastic cups, and the 25-cent chances taken on the St. Bartholomew's raffle for a new Olds.

There are triumphs that mean a lot to the self-employed. These things carry little importance for those employed by others, but are totally and thrillingly relevant to the self-employed. Among them: paying a bill on time, getting paid for something on time, getting paid (period), noting offhandedly that one might make it through the year financially, finishing one project and launching another without getting 5,000 people to okay the first and getting approval from another 5,000 for starting the second, and avoiding new traps, such as the Easing Back to the Old Job in Pieces Trap and the Big Deal Trap. The first is commonly baited with the offer of a fee for going back to one's old job for a few days to help them out of a jam. No matter how tempting, one learns to avoid it with a polite no. The Big Deal Trap is an occupational hazard of the self-employed, because for reasons that are not altogether clear, people working on their own act as magnets for those who are in perpetual possession of seldom-executed big deals. This trap is rendered harmless when one is presented with a big deal, notes it, files it in his "big deal" file, and plows ahead with his own little deals.

Once such triumphs begin to occur with any frequency, the habit is formed and one concludes that despite a paucity of benefits and the trends of contemporary life one must live with, one has passed the mental point of no return. Then resolve hardens to protect the little freedoms and individual integrity that can surround self-employment. In the other corner, there is a combination of long-run fatigue, the whimsical cruelties of the market, and the push-pull attraction of the security-laden organization. The battle begins in earnest over whether one is to become an anachronism, a new trend, or one of a continuing small tribe. You ask, is all of this self-employment effort just a new trap with its own constraints, limitations, and demands on freedom? Perhaps so, but if it is, at least it's a trap of your own design and for that reason not at all a bad place to live. ■

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The International Screw Thread Commission

by Jim Clark

On May 31, 1918, the U. S. House of Representatives spent one hour debating the merits of a bill creating the Commission for the Standardization of Screw Threads. The legislation, sponsored by Representative John Tilson of Connecticut, was greeted with general indifference by the members, but there were a few questions. Several congressmen expressed fear that the screw people might be around longer, and cost more, than they were being assured was the case. At that very time, the Congress as a whole was harboring similar fears about World War I. But Tilson promised his colleagues that the commission would need less than one year to reach agreement on screw thread standards, which, he added, urgently required coordination so that the nuts and bolts of our battle weaponry would fit each other. Thus, the commission was designed not only to end itself quickly but also to help end the war. Besides, said Tilson, there would be no cost to the government, "not one red cent."

The Tilson bill received quick House approval and then was guided through the Senate by Senator Warren G. Harding. Harding ran into minor opposition from senators like Hitchcock of Nebraska, who observed, "I think it is very objectionable to create commissions. Congress has already created innumerable commissions, which, like Tennyson's brook, run on forever, even when their authority has ceased." Senator Harding promised his colleague that this commission would not last forever—in fact not for more than 60 days, because the war made hasty resolution of the nut and bolt question mandatory. Senator Harding put teeth into his promise right there on the floor by writing a 60-day limit to the commission's lifespan into the bill.

A House-Senate conference committee worked out the differences between the two versions of the bill and finally created a nine-member commission with authority to work six months.

Although World War I ended without standardized screw threads, or even a report from the commission, Congress gave the group three more years of existence on March 3, 1919. That was a big year, as the members made their first trip to Europe to discuss screw standards with appropriate officials from other countries. Travel and staff expenses were contributed indirectly by the federal agencies which "lent" full-time employees to staff the commission. The art of producing the screw thread budget from

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crisscrossing, countersigned memo-vouchers was so occult as to limit the players in the commission field to skilled bureaucrats. Technically, this particular group received no direct appropriations and therefore no government money, but the bills were paid.

On January 16, 1922, John Tilson reappeared to ask the House to extend the commission for another five years. He announced proudly that the screw thread deliberators had just turned out their first "tentative report." One recalcitrant congressman asked Tilson to "give some good reason why any such extension should be granted to a commission which was organized during the war and which we were told would be able to wind up and standardize most of the matters on which it was working in a very short time." He suggested with sarcasm that perhaps the commission should be appointed for life. Tilson admitted that perhaps it should.

In fact, Tilson did request that the screw thread standardizers be made permanent, in February, 1926. In the debate, Tilson put forth the old enlightened self-denial theory of public finance: "If there is nothing to be done, it will simply sleep."

The commission was perhaps sleeping, but its active metabolism required some sustenance nevertheless. This nourishment was provided according to the first rule of government—that the public employee looks after himself first and his program later, although both concerns are said to serve the public interest (especially in times of high unemployment). The screw thread commission consumed approximately $150,000 during its first eight years of existence, although Tilson, a literalist, repeated that the group had done "great work" at no expense to the taxpayer.

The Congress passed the permanence legislation, and John Tilson left the House in 1932 confident that his commission would live forever. In an Executive Order in 1933, however, President Roosevelt ordered the screw thread body abolished. To anyone not familiar with the U. S. government, this would appear to be the end of the story. Of course, it is not.

Coming out of the throes of the Depression, former screw thread staffers realized that they had never really depended upon Congress for anything other than a kind of official seal of authority. The operating funds had always come from subterranean sources in the form of borrowed employees and miscellaneous contributions from the participating agencies, anyway. Congress was in effect superfluous. So in 1939, the departments represented on the original commission—Com-

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merce, War, Army, and Navy—set up the Interdepartmental Screw Thread Committee, reassembled the staff, and were back in business. Utilizing a boost in prestige during World War II, the committee formed an alliance with screw thread people from about two dozen other countries and created the International Screw Threads Standards Commission.

In 1966, the committee's executive secretary, Irwin Fullmer, retired after 47 years on the job.

In recent years, the government's support for screw thread standardization efforts has fallen from about $500,000 to $250,000 a year. After spending an estimated $5 million wrestling with the problem over the last half century, the screw thread people are definitely cutting back a little. But there are still three international meetings to attend each year. At the latest, the U. S. learned that the Russians had switched to our standards.

On May 31, 1971, 53 years after the House of Representatives gave squeamish birth to the Commission for the Standardization of Screw Threads, Arthur Strang was in Europe for an international meeting of the standard setters. He is chairman of the commission that will not die—one of thousands in the government, which, like crab grass and sewer leaks, spring up irrepressibly everywhere despite efforts to cut off their water. Commissions have the numbers and tenacity that American entrepreneurs once were blessed with—as the old fighting spirit has passed into commissions, which occupy the growing gelatin zone of government. As entrepeneurs of parasitism, the commissions have a bright future, because no one cares as much about cutting each paltry little budget as the members care about seeing them survive. A flowering is therefore assured, and it seems like a good idea for everyone. Although the screw thread committee is a bit crowded, there are still a lot of spots left elsewhere. ■

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BOOKS:

Split Over the Atom: The Bang vs. the Whimper

a review by Suzannah Lessard

Man and Atom by Glenn T. Seaborg and William Corliss. E. P. Dutton. $10.00.
Poisoned Power by John W. Gofman and Arthur R. Tamplin. Rodale. $6.95.

Glenn Seaborg, Chairman of the Atomic Energy Commission, is a tall man with a stoop, bushy eyebrows that peak upward, a punched-looking face, and a grandmotherly manner. His physical presence is primitive—arms too long, heavy features—counterpointed by extreme intelligence in his eyes, the lines of his face, and the set of his mouth. His speech is bland, careful, connoting propriety—the propriety of the AEC, of nuclear physics, of people in the future living in underground "nuplexes." Kindly, but a trifle cold. Only infrequently does he show emotion, a shadow of anger towards his denouncers, or a momentary display of pride: "I am the discoverer of the radioactive isotope which is used in 90 per cent of the radioactive-isotope treatments in hospitals." He is also the discoverer of plutonium, the magic stuff of breeder reactors, and his recent book, *Man and Atom*, co-authored by William Corliss, is about the epic of nuclear energy, which has dominated a large portion of his life. The book is neither bland nor cold, but passionate, often poetic, and visionary in a way only science can be. Its scope is broad, wandering into such romances as continental drift and the origins of the cosmos. But the focus is nuclear energy, a resource which

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in his view will save the human race from the disaster he predicts will otherwise soon occur when conventional energy sources fail. "To put the matter in prophetic language," he writes, "if man can learn to 'burn' the rocks and water; that is, extract energy via fission and fusion processes; human civilization will not be just a brief fossil-fueled flicker in the long, cosmic night."

John Gofman, who, as it happens, studied under Seaborg and helped him develop plutonium, has also written a book about nuclear energy. Co-authored by Arthur Tamplin, it's called *Poisoned Power: The Case Against Nuclear Power Plants*. From the photographs on the back of the book, the two scientists radiate 180-proof saintliness, but in conversation Gofman is erratic, incautious and ornery, alternately compulsive and receptive, certainly not decorous, impersonal, or bland. Conversation with him is like being on a roller coaster. If Seaborg sees himself as instrumental in the salvation of civilization through nuclear energy, Gofman has taken the role of saving civilization from Seaborg & Co.: "He's absolutely right about civilization flickering out. There won't be any more civilization because there won't be any more people."

Gofman and Tamplin have made something of a career out of opposing the AEC. Their latest effort is strident, indiscriminately hysterical, and moralistic. They communicate none of the grace of a mind like Seaborg's, nor the discipline, but pelt their sundry ammunition, duds and all, with feverish energy—a veritable shrew of a book. Yet, as in Gofman's conversation, there is very live ammo in with the dross—barbs which land in the jugular of the AEC's propaganda, and cannonballs which knock the wind out of the mythology of nuclear "progress" and the wonders of technology.

The only certainty a layman can take away from these books is the terrifying discrepancy between interpretations of facts by these two sets of experts. Worse, both press their opposed cases with alternate threats of doom. Is one dealing with egomaniacs on the one hand and a couple of Berkeley crackpots on the other? Or is the gulf between these perceptions truly an unknown, containing the full gamut of the possibilities set forth in these opposing views? The need for debate, for scrupulous presentation and counter-presentation of evidence seems urgent. However, I would wager that a debate between Gofman and Tamplin, Seaborg and Corliss would get us nowhere.

Just the Facts

The hard-core factual disagreement centers on evaluation of the hazards of radiation. The chief dangers are cancer and genetic mutation. Everyone seems in agreement that given the range of evidence, from the survivors of Hiroshima and Nagasaki to experiments with fruit flies, both effects are indisputably caused by radiation—in massive doses. The trick is in evaluating lesser doses. Gofman and Tamplin claim that exposure to 170 millirads per year—the maximum permissable dose—will increase cancer deaths in the exposed group by 10 per cent.

Gofman says there is no debate among doctors about these figures, that compared with other estimates, they are conservative. But Seaborg says, "Most biological scientists think Gofman is overestimating by a factor of 10," and he adds that in any event the average individual exposure to radiation from a nuclear power source is .001 millirads. (That average is more than a little misleading because it takes account of everyone in the country, not just the exposed people near the plants.) He also points out that they have lowered the seepage in plants so that no person within the perimeters is exposed to more than five millirads per year, "and of course it gets lower and lower as you move away from the plant." "Who cares if they have lowered the emissions inside the plants?" said Gofman. "GE

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and Westinghouse have announced that they can build a reactor with zero leakage. What I'm concerned about is transport and disposal of radioactive wastes and routine emissions into the environment, where it starts concentrating in the food chain." Seaborg's assurance sounds a little weak when he dismisses the problem of concentration in the food chain.

On the other hand, the Gofman and Tamplin clarion sounds a bit tinny when you learn that someone living in Grand Central Station would be exposed to 400 millirads a year from the "natural" radiation given off by the granite. "If that's true, it's a terrible hazard," says Gofman, but somehow this fact about familiar old Grand Central diminishes the fright voltage considerably. Yet, while at this level of the argument it may not sound as though we are gambling with the survival of civilization, it does not make sense to justify a risk by saying "If nature does it why can't we?" It is well known that everyone is exposed to a certain amount of natural radiation. That doesn't change the fact that radiation can cause genetic disease and cancer, and that the higher the dose is the greater the risk. Secondly, Grand Central Station is almost certainly not emitting radiation into the food chain, nor producing poisonous wastes, nor could it, through some quirk, suddenly release all its stored radioactivity into the environment.

A second area of disagreement is the possibility of accidents. Gofman and Tamplin throw in every possibility from explosions to Mafia hijackings. "Plutonium will become as commonplace as heroin and even more profitable," they write. Seaborg predictably minimizes the risks, but one senses that even if they were much higher, he would find them tolerable. Indeed, if you accept the assumption that the alternative is the end of civilization, what other conclusion could you possibly come to? The major danger of accidents, it seems to me, lies in the transportation of the poisonous wastes. The safest method yet devised for disposing of these materials, which remain potent for 1,000 years, is burial in salt mines. This means that they will be transported regularly over long distances, and in time an accident seems almost inevitable.

Gofman and Tamplin's strongest points in the danger debate are that safety is the least interesting feature of any scientific project, always the last to get the money and talent, and that the AEC is so clearly committed to the development of reactors that their response to criticism is not to pursue the question but to deflect it. This comes through much more in conversation with Seaborg than in his book. He categorically refutes any criticism of the AEC. And while making no bones about his belief that nuclear energy must and will be developed, he denies that he is a biased evaluator, in fact claims his involvement is an asset. One can see why he thinks that way: since the idea of not going ahead with fission is simply inconceivable to him, he sees no need for the kind of evaluator who would say, stop, it's not worth it.

The Dialectic Heroes

Because of the contradictions, the factual information in these books leads you nowhere. Far richer is the confrontation between the philosophies of progress and reversion. In the context of nuclear power, the advocates of reversion convey a sense of almost fairy-tale-like transgression—the forbidden room. Against the vision of man as olympian in possession of a Promethean gift, they pose man as a fool fingering the combination on Pandora's box. Vain stupidity is not a heroic characteristic, but neither is abstention from risk, so the picture of man becomes anti-heroic and one begins to think about the frailty of his existence and how there is nothing to guarantee that we won't blow the whole thing with a stupid, or even not so stupid mistake.

The possibility of a man-made cataclysm has occurred to every

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modern mind. Gofman and Tamplin constantly appeal to that awareness, conjuring up disaster with images of uncontrollable chain reactions and demonic characterizations: "Plutonium was aptly named: Plutonium—the element of the Lord of Hell. . . . These men would seem to be possessed with a death wish that encompasses all mankind." Yet the real threat is something much more difficult to grasp than an apocalypse. None of the evidence suggests that everything will go with a bang. It is more likely that genetic mutations would deform huge sections of the population and that the human race would hobble on, permanently disfigured, in a poisonous, but not lethal environment. There is something so senseless and nihilistic about such a conclusion that it is almost impossible to entertain.

World destruction through nuclear war is much easier to grasp because it makes a kind of sense within our mythology—the perhaps inevitable consequence of Man's lethal combination of inventiveness and belligerence. And however horrible it may be, it is at least a conclusion of epic proportions. Perhaps the need to play on this stage explains why Gofman and Tamplin continually undermine their case by resorting to hyperbole, for the imagination tends simply to shut down on miserable half-way disasters.

The rhetoric of epic cataclysm is a hallmark of Seaborg's book as well. He argues that doom is inevitable unless we develop nuclear energy. When the giants of technology are reduced to such negative goals it would seem that the myth of technology has already suffered a grave reversal: Seaborg extols science not as the means toward a better, more civilized world but simply as a holding operation against chaos and misery. So, for the first time technology is on the defensive. It *has* to come through, and one of the reasons for the urgency is that the world we have built cannot exist without massive amounts of power. Though defensive, this is one of Seaborg's best arguments against the advocates of reversion: that we have a man-made environment and we're stuck with it. There are too many of us and we've gone too far in interdependence, and now only technology can save us from disaster. If we don't keep the energy flowing at high levels, the economic and sociological shock waves of a power loss will reverberate through the society with drastic, unanticipated force. In that sense a back-to-the-earth movement is ridiculous. The technocrats have become indispensible to everyone.

Seaborg brings hold-the-fort reasoning to problems other than the energy crisis. He has visions of people forced to live underground because of either crowding or a filthy environment—with all adjustments made possible, of course, by nuclear energy. I asked him whether such a future appealed to him and he replied that it would be much like underground areas of buildings that exist today. "They're quite livable. They'd have good air." But he finally admitted, "For myself, I'd have to say no. I like the outdoors. I like to hike. On the Appalachian trail." Don't we all.

The scientific mind does not easily apply its vision to itself. It is geared to changing things out there, for the masses, in the future, and doing it efficiently. There is an unmistakable appetite for power projected through these grand designs, the supreme arrogance of a discipline which sees itself molding the fate of the human race.

The superman image is fleshed out more positively when Seaborg writes about projects beyond defensive technology. Planetary engineering is one—using nuclear power to correct "nature's oversights"— carving out harbors on the west coast of South America, closing up Gibraltar so that the Mediterranean will become fresh, tapping deep reservoirs beneath the Sahara and turning it green again. "It should be obvious by now that nuclear civil engineering is an imaginative discipline," he writes. This is good old

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sci fi stuff, and it makes captivating reading. So too are his cyborgs—men whose bodies have been largely replace by nuclear-powered limbs and organs, giving them immense strength and durability, and his underground nuplexes, where plants photosynthesize beneath nuclear "suns" and the farmers of the future push buttons. No Fuss No Muss. Visiting Seaborg's future, nausea begins to seep through fascination, and one gets a quite tangible sense of what Gofman and Tamplin mean when they say "Our science and technology have become uncoupled from society."

Whose Baby Are We?

Gofman and Tamplin accuse the technocrats of irresponsible manipulation of the environment for their own gratification. Their charges are too hyperbolic to swallow whole, but reading through Seaborg's future, a notion occurred which grew as the book delved deeper and deeper into the promise of the atom. If you see this sort of potential, and particularly if you have a hand in uncovering it, then you want to do it, want to make harbors and suns, not to mention breeder reactors. I can't imagine how anyone could not want to try it all out. Yet the life span is too short for most men to see their visions come to fruition, and hence there must be a powerful urge to speed things up, to cut corners and take risks, so that you can see as much of it happen as possible. A man would have to have 300 years in front of him to be free of that drive. The financial investment in the nuclear-power industry represents an immense hindrance to shutting it down, as does the desire for self-preservation and growth on the part of the AEC and the hundreds of thousands of dependent people spreading out from it. Everything has been arranged—money put down, careers mapped out, and plans drawn up. There is something in human nature that abhors disrupting arrangements, and the momentum is tremendous. But the driving spark which keeps this fast conglomeration of plans hard on the track to fulfillment rather than coasting comfortably and rather aimlessly along in the manner of most bureaucracies, is the consuming motivation of the scientist at the top.

Along these lines, Gofman and Tamplin level a very specific charge at the advocates of fission energy. Nuclear fusion, they say, is much cleaner and safer and on the brink of development, yet the AEC keeps pouring its money into building less efficient, less safe breeder reactors. In an interview, Gofman attributed this to the inertia of a bureaucracy tailored to the development of fission and the personal investment of the leading scientists—Seaborg in particular, because of his long and intimate involvement in the development of the process. "Once one has glowed about the prospects of one's discovery, one tends to dismiss anything that comes up suggesting it's less than you thought," said Gofman. "Glenn Seaborg can't let the vision go. So he wants to freeze fusion so that the breeder program can go ahead. It's his baby."

If this charge is true, Glenn Seaborg is probably unaware of it. Just as he denies any temptation to push things to fruition before their time, he denies any subjective partiality to fission. Yet his defense is weakest when it comes to fusion. "We wouldn't know until 1985 whether fusion was possible and we wouldn't have a plant until the year 2000" (which is about when we will begin to really feel the limitations of fossil-fuel resources). In other words, we won't have it in time to forestall disaster. Gofman and Tamplin dispute this schedule, as do other scientists. Even Seaborg admits that fusion would be a cleaner and safer source of energy, and a random check suggested that there is a strong sense among scientists that fusion is the real energy of the future. Yet, the AEC spends only a hundredth as much on fusion research as it does on the breeder program. Given Seaborg's predictions of disaster, he must feel that

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if fission becomes the saving source of energy—even if it eventually gives way to fusion—he will have played a critical part in saving civilization from the long cosmic night. It would take a saintly man indeed to resist such pressures.

Gofman and Tamplin are at their best not when attacking Glenn Seaborg but in discussing generally the motives and pressures in a scientist's life. They point out that one of the failings of the discipline is to instill a sense of the honorable defeat: "We desperately need to create an atmosphere where a man can proudly admit error. In a vast majority of instances the error is not the result of negligence, not the result of deceit, not the result of irresponsibility. It is simply the result of the great power of hindsight, especially hindsight buttressed by new evidence and altered circumstances."

As we move into an era where the scale of potential damage from technological adventures is unprecedented, it may well be that our true scientific heroes will be those who are able to expose the dangers in their own work.

Obscuring the Issue

At the present, however, the odds are against it, perhaps not so much because of the lure of success and stardom as because of the dense obscurity which would envelop a man who, towards the end of a lifetime of work, found that his course had been bypassed by the highway of the future. Particularly for someone working in the growing tip of a discipline, obscurity is even more horrifying than success is alluring. Gofman and Tamplin's disquieting documentation of AEC biases, its role as promoter rather than watchdog, and its intolerance of criticism—coupled with the passionate absorption expressed in Seaborg's book—strongly imply that the motivations and pressures discussed above play a leading part in decisions. In their words, "It is axiomatic: scientists chosen in this way (according to success in their field) are not likely to make decisions which will embarrass their technology." This interpretation explains for instance the incredible arrogance with which the agency persists in proceeding with such projects as the proposed underground test in Alaska—the arrangements have all been made—in the face of opposition from every quarter, including scientific opinion from outside the AEC. The inevitable influence of these motivations, even in men of the highest integrity, overwhelmingly recommends that matters of such consequence cannot be left to the discretion of people with a personal investment in the direction of development.

In light of this situation, the suggestion that we institute an adversary system of scientific inquiry is most timely. If a method of orderly scientific debate were developed, then matters could be argued in the open before a jury screened for both financial and emotional investments, rather than being resolved according to the biases of a few intensely involved men. Another point made by Gofman and Tamplin is that these decisions need not be the exclusive domain of the experts—that the layman can understand and evaluate the risks of a highly sophisticated project. He need not know exactly how the atom is put to work to comprehend what happens when it is.

There is an inbred resistance among scientists to the idea that the layman can make intelligent decisions on matters involving science. Even Gofman and Tamplin betray prejudice against lay ability. One does not come away from their book feeling that one has been invited to learn, only that one has been roundly catechized.

Two Worlds

All experts, and particularly scientists, have a way of throwing up a smokescreen of technical esoterica when faced with probing questions. The technique is extremely effective,

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as the inquirer is immediately paralyzed. A man like Seaborg for the most part argues smoothly and persuasively, communicating scrupulous caution and sophisticated resolutions of thoroughly understood problems. From his words one would deduce that the technology is magnificently competent and refined. But when crude, unbelievably primitive concepts breach the assuring facade, the spell bursts and doubt surges through the entire proposition. Such a breach is the solution of burying radioactive wastes for a millenium in a salt mine. Against the precision and sophistication of the minds which developed the streamlined process of fission, this sounds like the behavior of a frightened man who, having made a ghastly mistake, buries the corpse in the woods and hopes the whole thing will go away.

Another boggling crudity is Seaborg's reasoning—also used in defending the proposed test in Alaska—that the risk of causing earthquakes with underground nuclear explosions (carving out those vast cavities in which future nuplexes will be built) is justified because tensions are building up in the earth's crust anyway and it's better to let them rip before they get worse. One begins to realize that distaste for the canned future projected by the wizards is unwarranted; that there are lots of jolly surprises, plenty of intriguing variations contained in the can.

Like living on the main axis of power, living in the thrust of technology is a trying business which entails all sorts of tensions and responsibilities one could do quite happily without. The night we landed on the moon my father was in a small village deep in the French countryside, but all the bars stayed open until three in the morning, and then, when Neil Armstrong set foot on the lunar surface, the churchbells rang for miles around, even the bells of a Benedictine monastery dedicated to the study and preservation of a musical tradition more than 1,000 years old.

A friend was in a remote corner of South America on the same day. He told an old Indian that we had landed on the moon. The Indian said, "What did they want to do that for?" and went on with his business.

Both responses are spontaneous, classic, and enviable—because they are so simple. But they are responses which we, in the thrust, cannot afford. Though far less pure, the authors of these two books reflect versions of the same polarity: Seaborg embracing the future, keen to the heroic element, and Gofman and Tamplin dismissing those visions as trivial and dangerous. But neither pole is tenable any longer. Seaborg's future is, by his own admission, gruesome in too many aspects—so the technological adventure, reduced to providing desperate remedies for the ills it has itself created, becomes self-defeating. Compounded by the horrendous risks, the adventure has become a very poor option. Gofman and Tamplin rail at those risks, crying "Ecocide!", demand that they be reduced to zero, and add that anyway the forward thrust should be turned inward. On balance, one must cast one's lot with them—but with trepidation, because their passionate assault evades the fact that we are irrevocably committed to a technological environment and that we are inevitably going to have to take risks and pay prices in order to solve the crises in that environment.

Glenn Seaborg sees the advent of nuclear energy as the dawning of a new era. One way or another, he's probably right, for if we reject the world of nuplexes and cyborgs, it will be because we have successfully developed new myths, a new philosophy and a long-spurned truce with nature. Gofman and Tamplin have unwittingly shown that the terms of such a truce are far from developed, still crude and thick-tongued and desperately unorganized, as they seek to wrest power from the whirring gears and oiled wheels of the huge and willful mechanism our technology has become. ■

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POLITICAL BOOK NOTES

This section lists public affairs books scheduled for publication this month. Publishers who want descriptions of their books included should notify us two months in advance and provide a brief (50 words or less) objective summary of the contents.

Blacktown, U. S. A. Frank Keegan. Little, Brown, $8.95.

A Class Divided. William Peters. Doubleday, $4.95.

Condemned to Freedom: The Breakdown of Liberal Society. William Pfaff. Random House $6.95.

Down the Line. Bayard Rustin. Quadrangle, $10.

Encounters with the Arch Druid: Narratives about a Conservationist and Three of His Natural Enemies. John McPhee. Farrar, Straus and Giroux, $6.95.

Fifteen Men on a Powder Keg: A History of the UN Security Council. Andrew Boyd. Stein and Day, $7.95.

The Forging of the American Empire. Sidney Lens. Thomas Y. Crowell, $10.
Proposes that America has forged a world empire while maintaining its innocence of imperialistic designs.

The Future of the U. S. Government: Toward the Year 2000. Edited by Harvey S. Perloff. Braziller, $7.50.

Going to Jail: The Political Prisoner. Howard Levy, M. D. and David Miller. Grove, $6.

The Liberated Woman and Other Americans. Midge Decter. Coward, $6.95.

Nations in Darkness. John Stoessinger. Random House, $6.95.

The Political Image Merchants: Strategies in the New Politics. Edited by Dr. Ray Hiebert, Robert Jones, Ernest Lotito, and John Lorenz. Acropolis, $6.95; $3.95 paper.
The techniques, successes and failures of campaign managers, advertising agencies, pollsters and public relations firms.

Politics and the Stages of Growth. Walter W. Rostow. Cambridge University Press, $9.50; paper $3.95.

Reapportionment in the 1970s. Edited by Nelson W. Polsby, University of California Press, $7.50.
Forecasts reapportionment trends and issues in the next decade, including an analysis of the impact of the "one-man-one-vote" principle when gerrymandering remains a legal tactic of majority parties.

Second in Command: The Uncensored Account of the Capture of the Spy Ship Pueblo. Edward R. Murphy with Curt Gentry. Holt, Rinehart & Winston, $8.95.

With Justice for Some: An Indictment of the Law by Young Advocates. Edited by Bruce Wasserstein and Mark J. Green. Beacon, $12.50.
Law students and young attorneys in the public interest field discuss the failures of contemporary law, supply blueprints for reform, and call for a major restructuring of our legal system.

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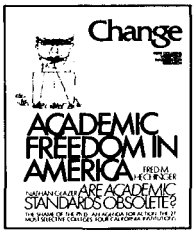

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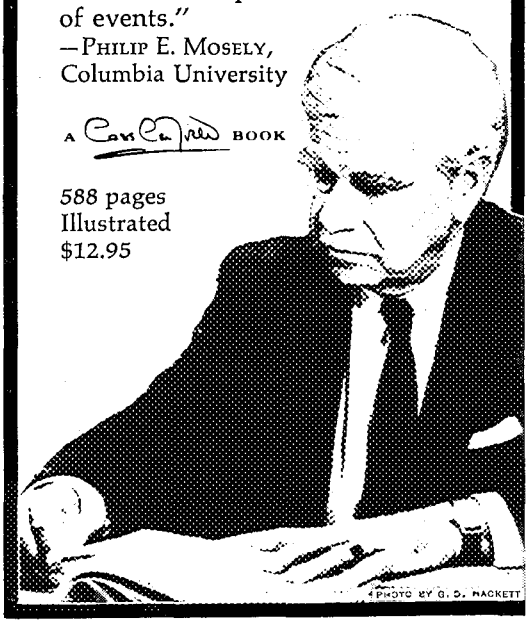

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